

**PRECEPTORIAL LINE
OF
SUCCESSION
AND
SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA**

PROF. R. P. SASMAL

SRĪMAD BKAS SEVĀSHRAM (Regd.)

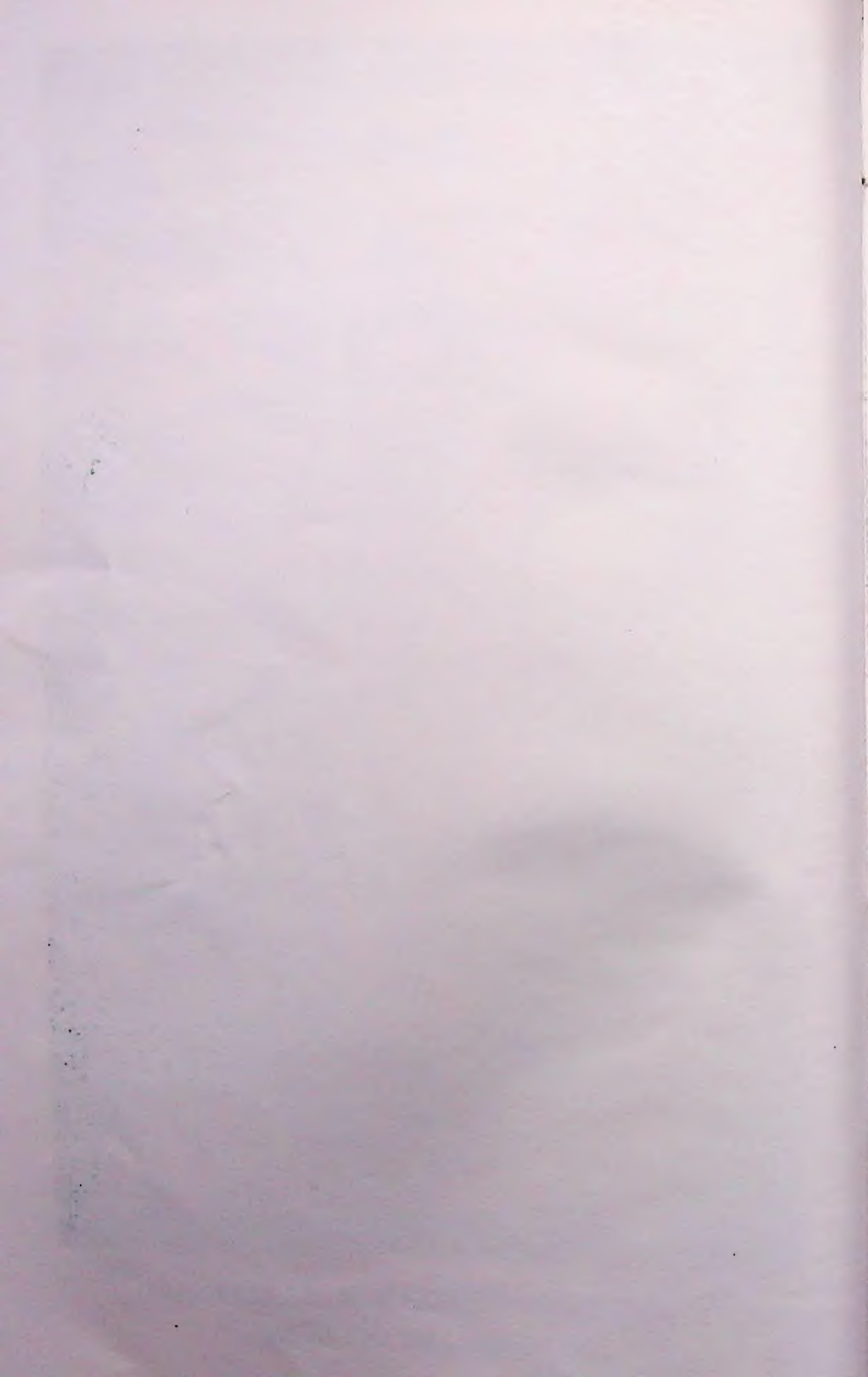
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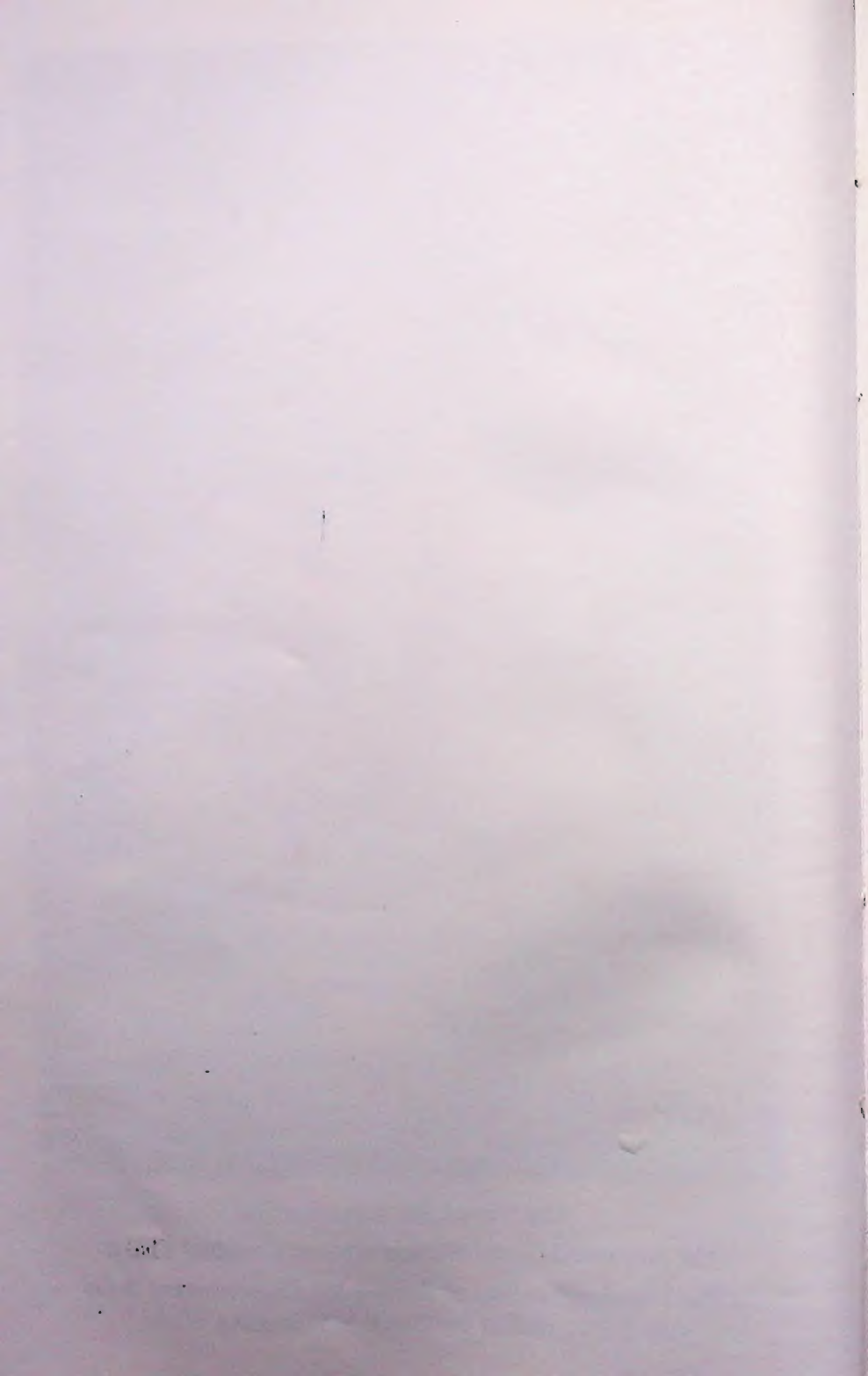
SRĪSRĪKRISHNA-CHAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU
(The Supreme Lord Śrī Gourāṅga)





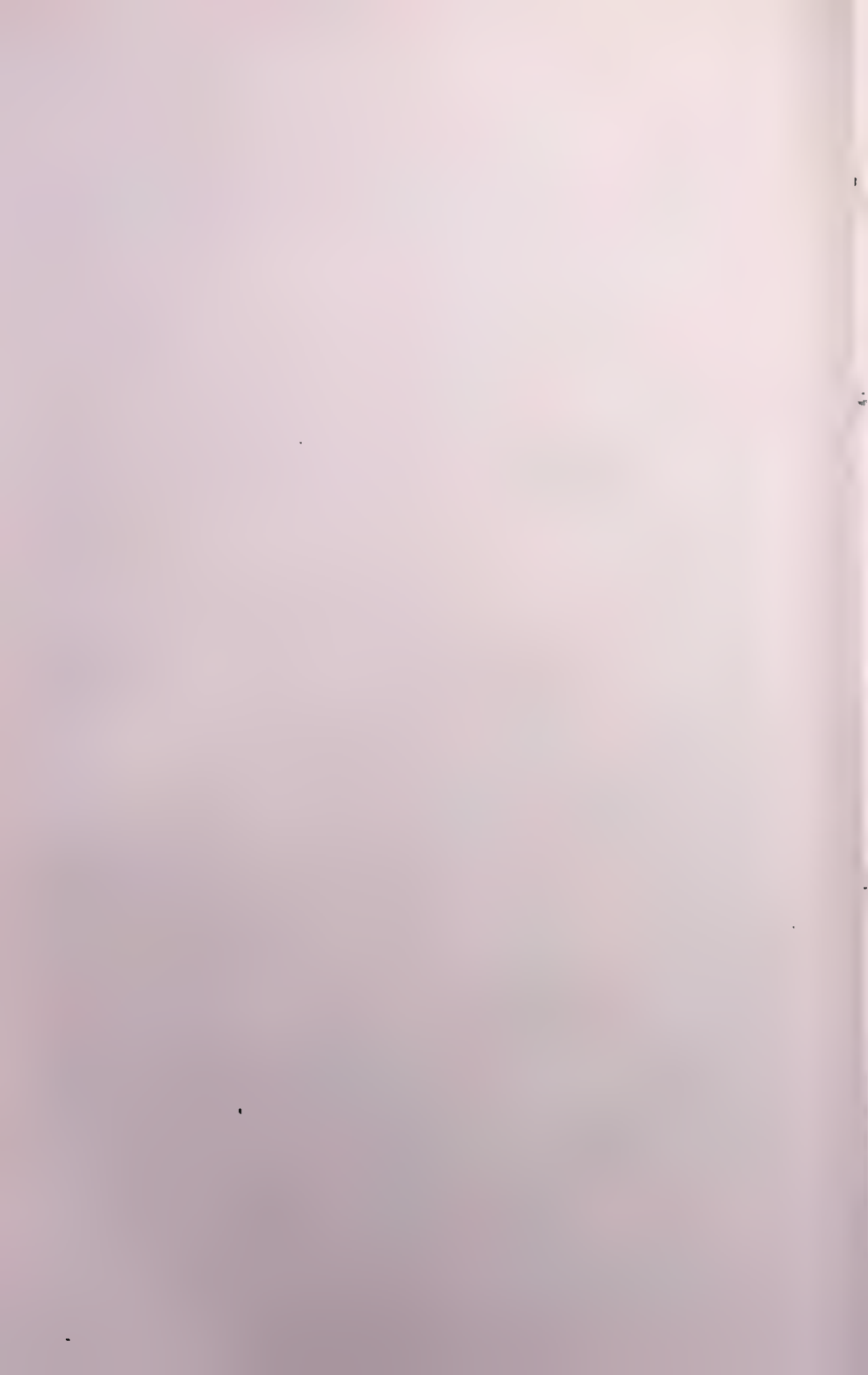
Om Vishnupād Paramahansa

108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Bhūsan Bhāratī Goswāmī Thākura
[The Founder President of Srimad BKAS Sevashram & the
present Preceptor of the Gaudiya Vaishnava World]





Om Vishnupād Paramahansa
108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākura



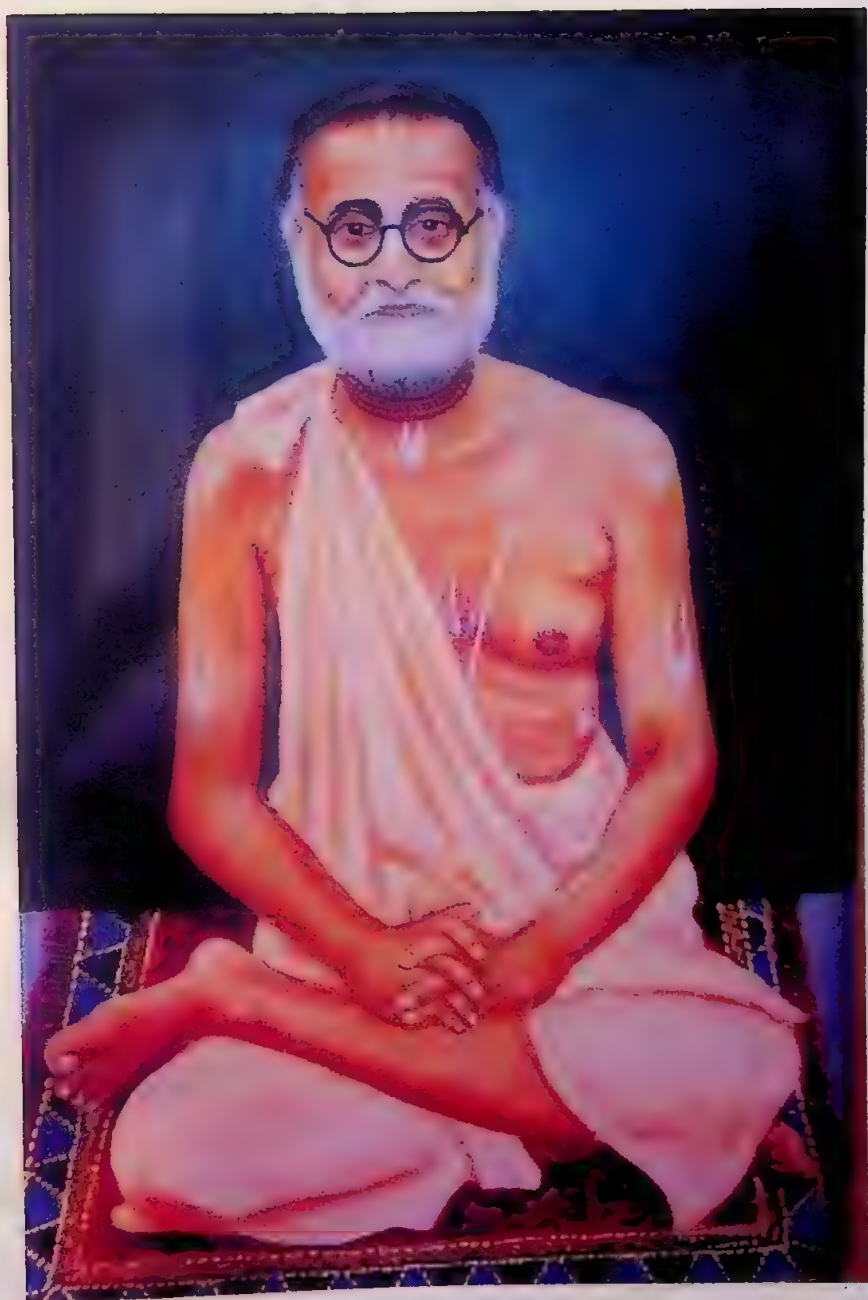


Om Vishnupād Paramahansa
108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Pradīp Tīrtha Goswāmī Thākura



Om Vishnupād Paramahansa
108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswāmī Thākura
(Śrīla Āchāryadeva)





Om Vishnupād Paramahansa
108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Goswāmī Thākura



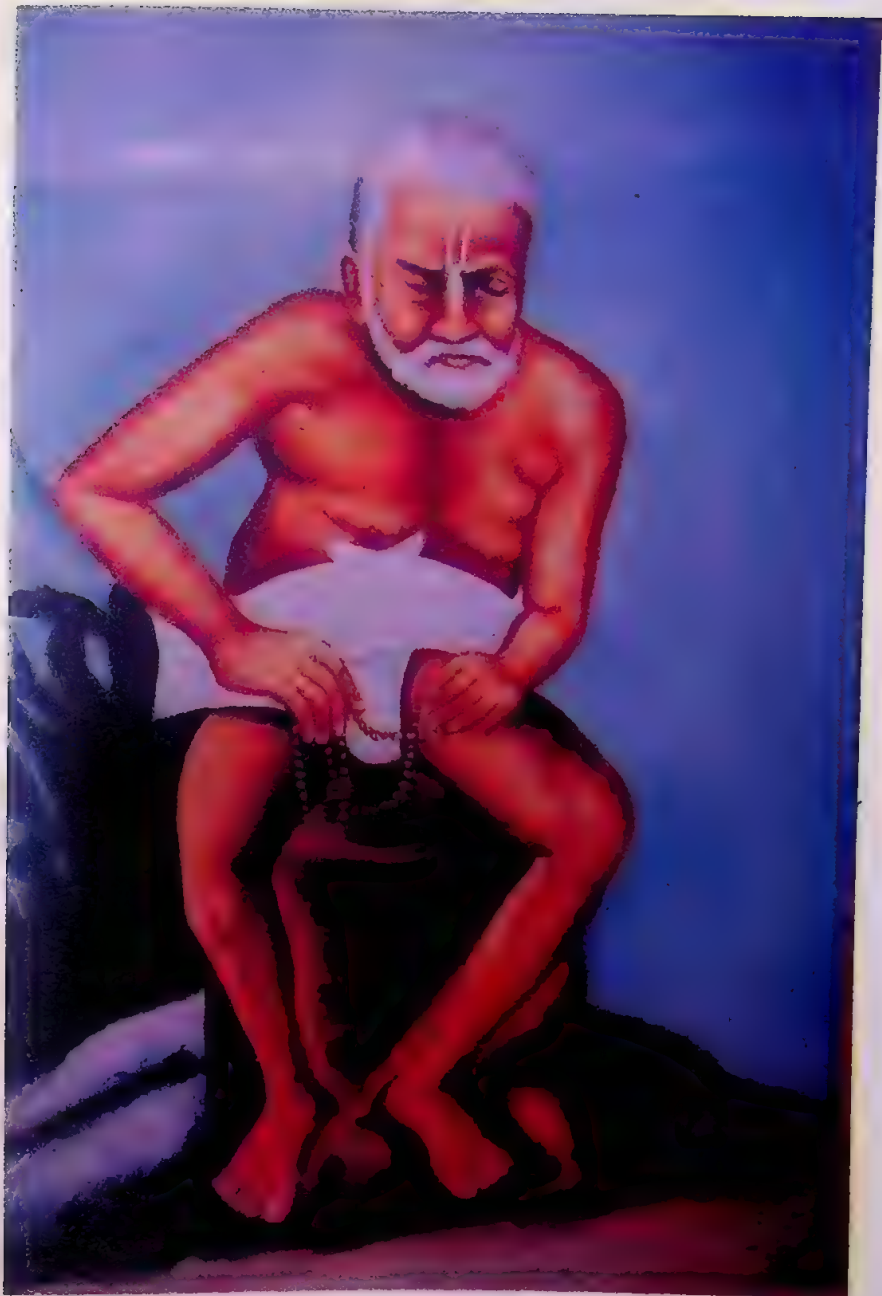


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108 Srī Srīmad Gourkishore Dās Bābājī Mahārāj



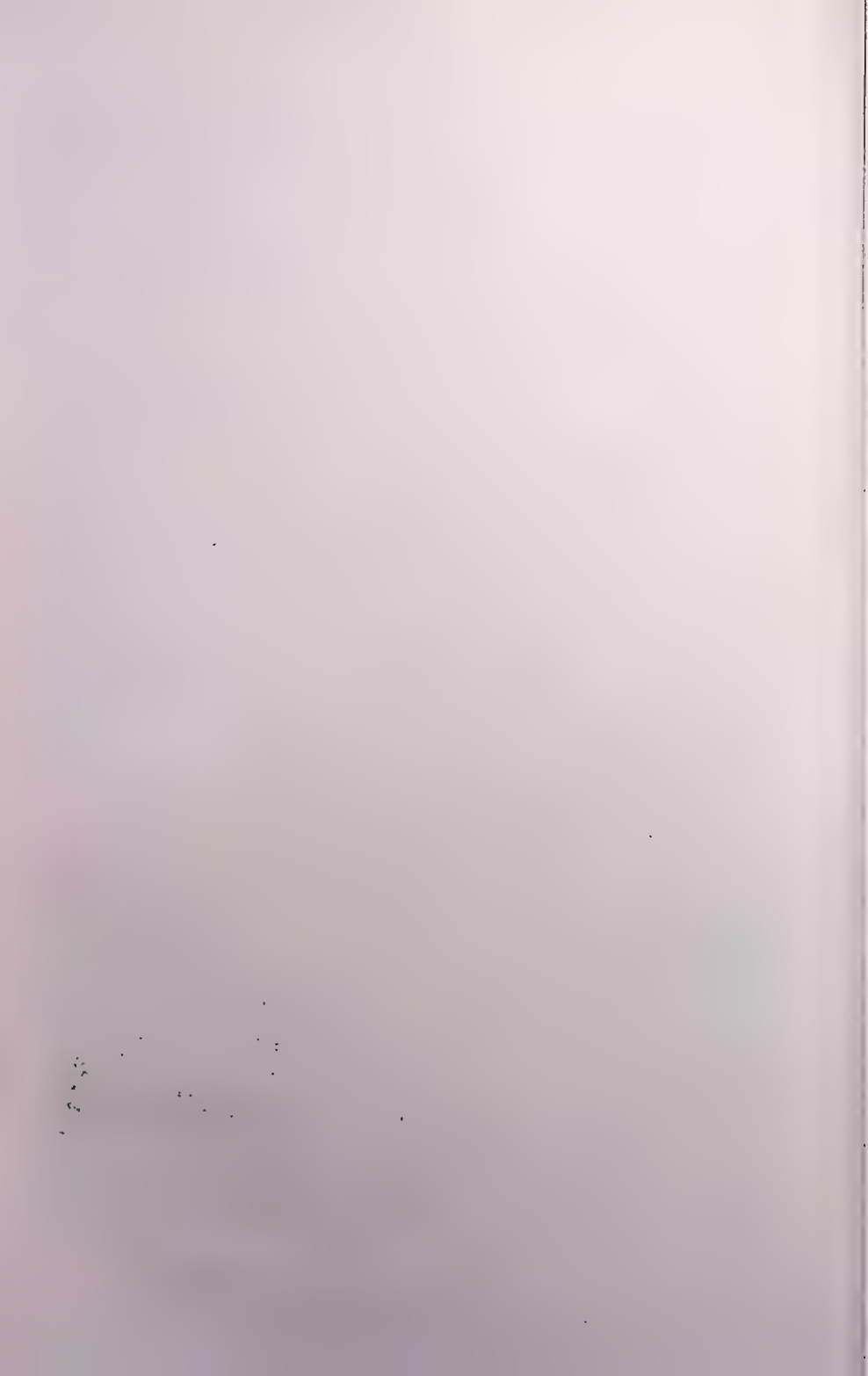
Om Vishnupād Paramahansa
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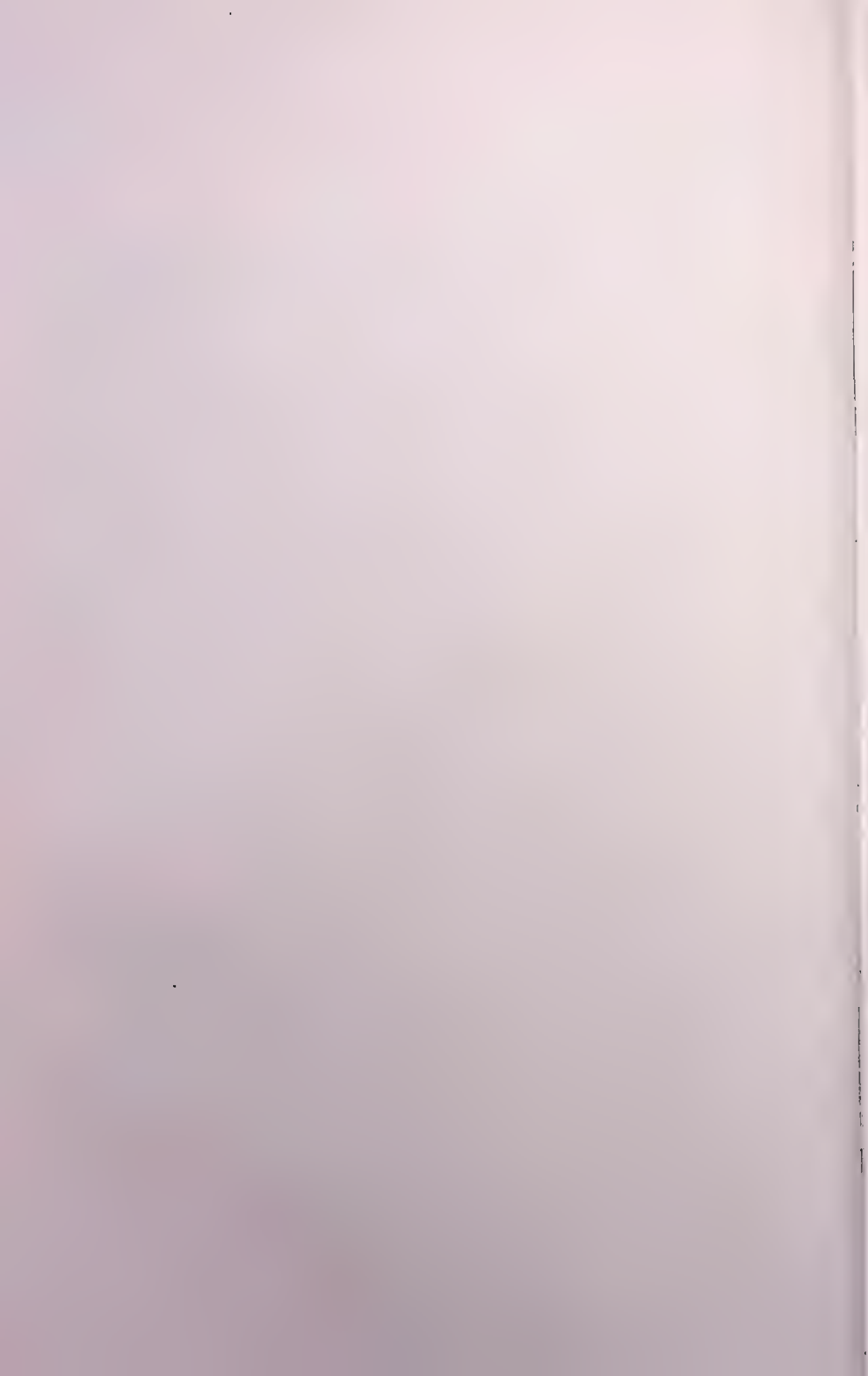
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108 Srī Srīmad Vaishnava-sārbabhouma Jagannāth Dās Bābājī
Mahārāj



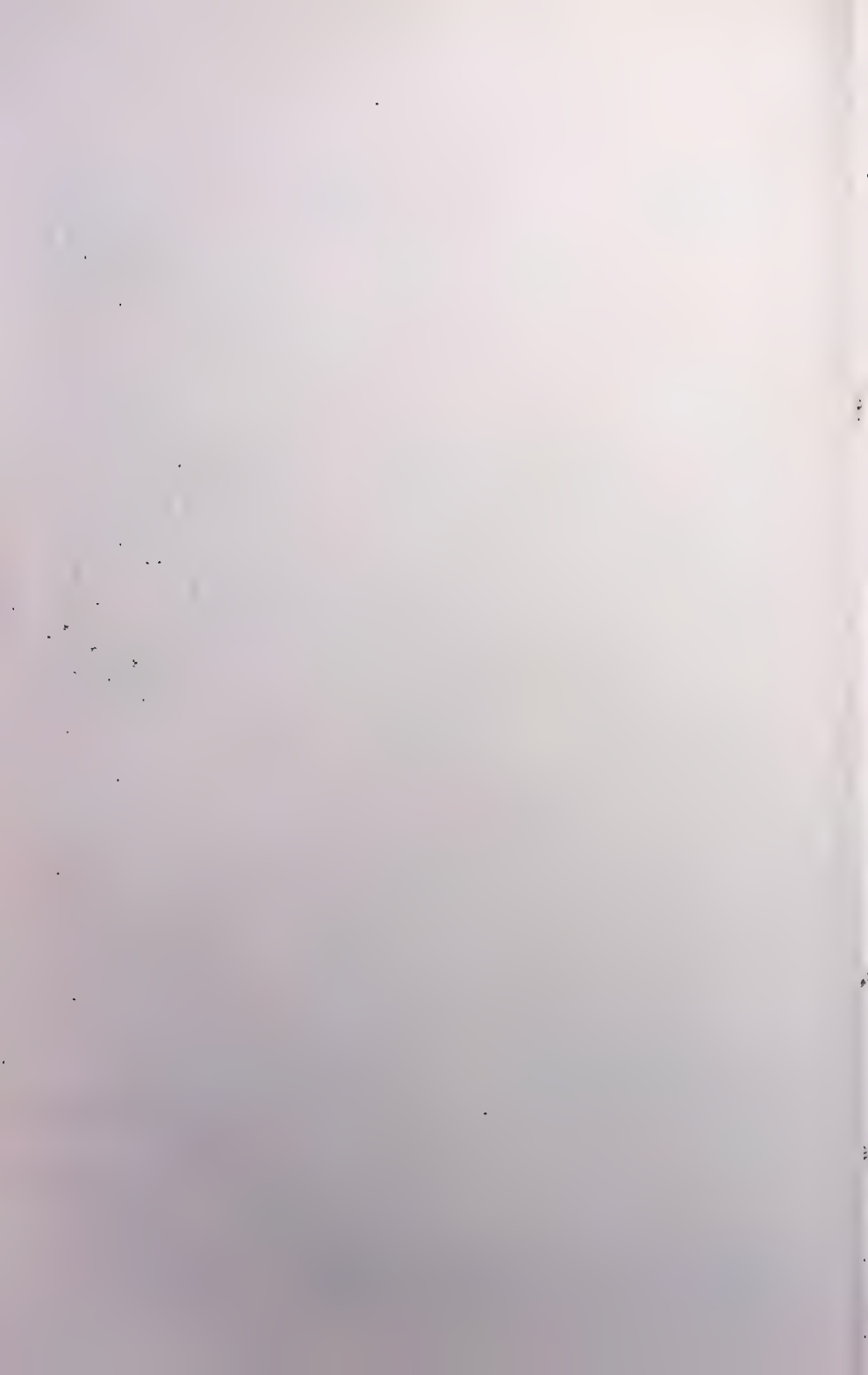


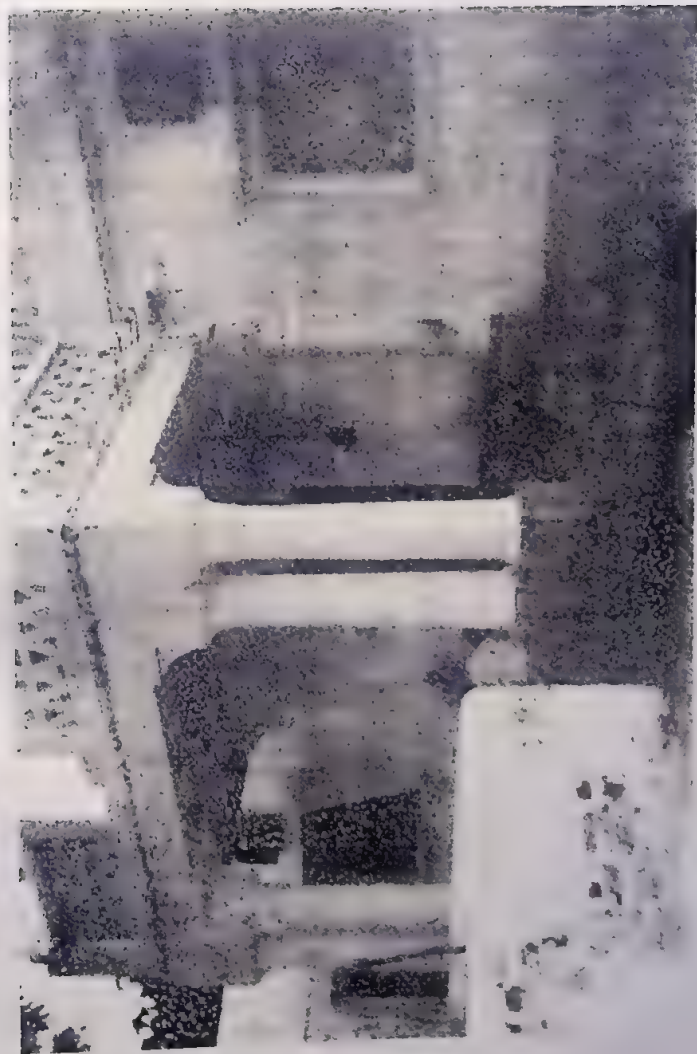
**Srīla Āchāryadeva seated as a Brahmachārī at the lotus-feet
of Srīla Saraswatī Thākur**





Srīla Āchāryadeva's *Bhajan Kutir* at Srī Rādhārāna Bāgichā,
Pānihāti, Srīdhām Vrindāvan.

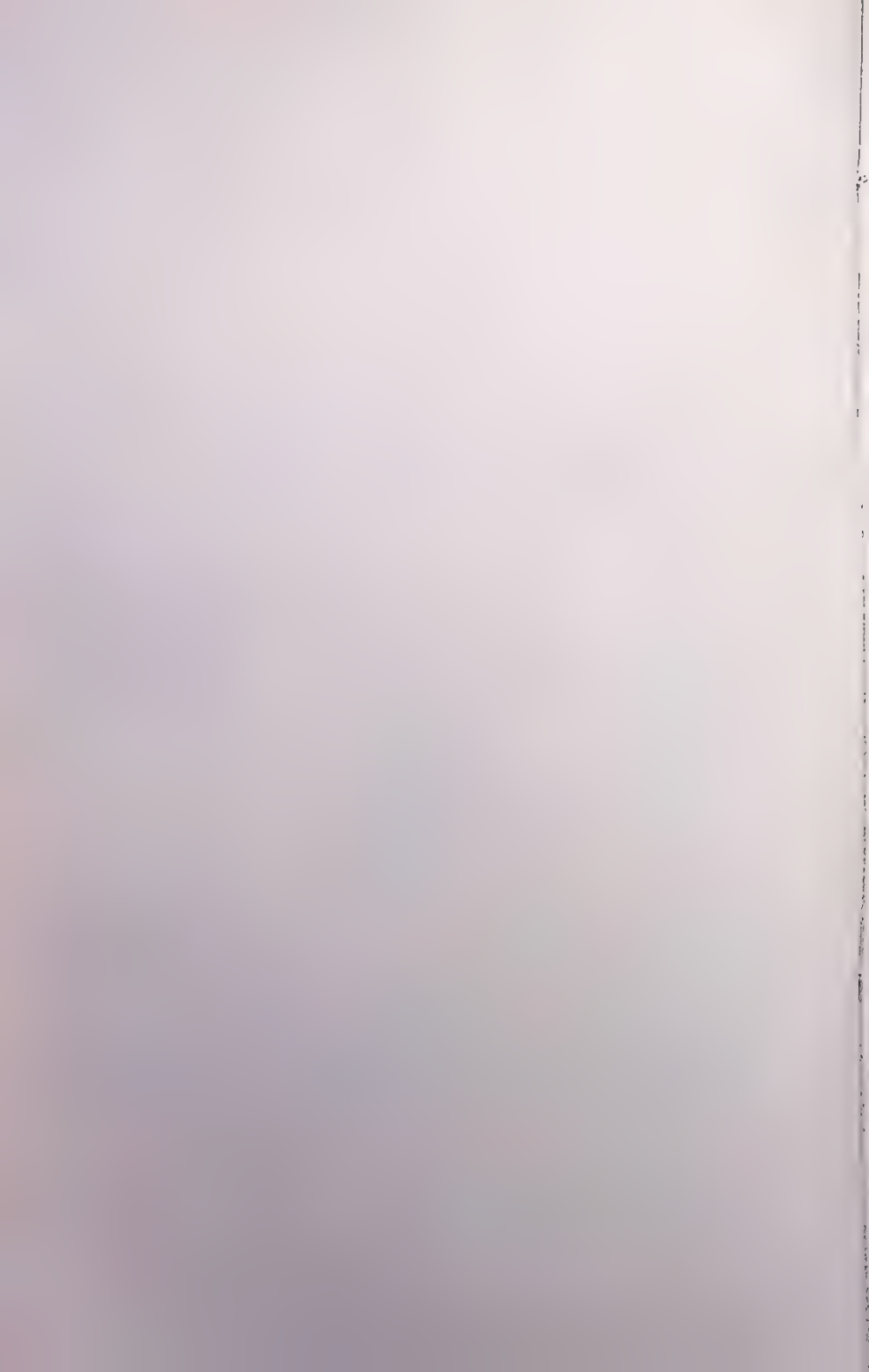




The Holy Samādhī Temple of Śrīla Āchāryadeva at
Śrī Gourdhām in Śrī Rādhākunda

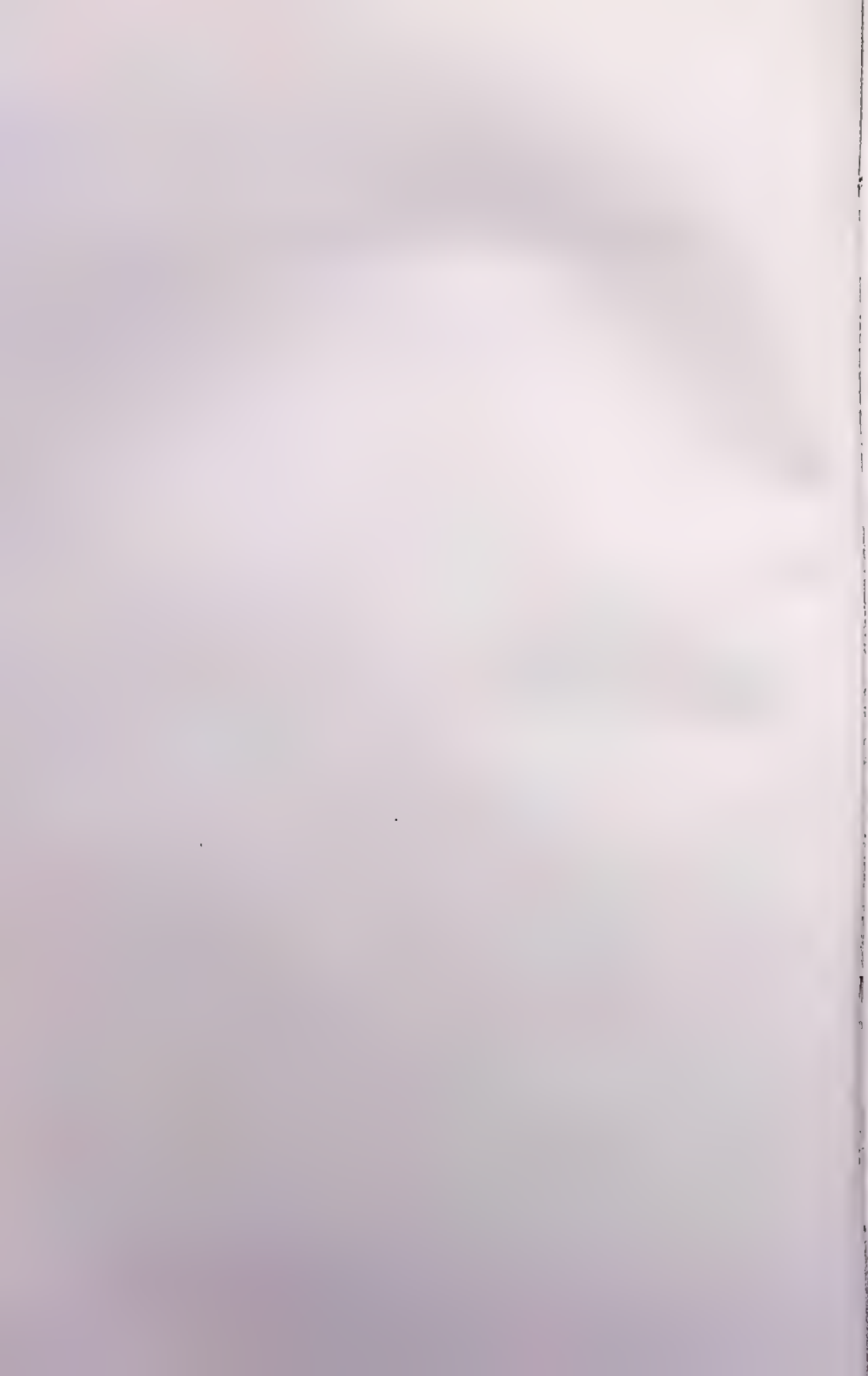


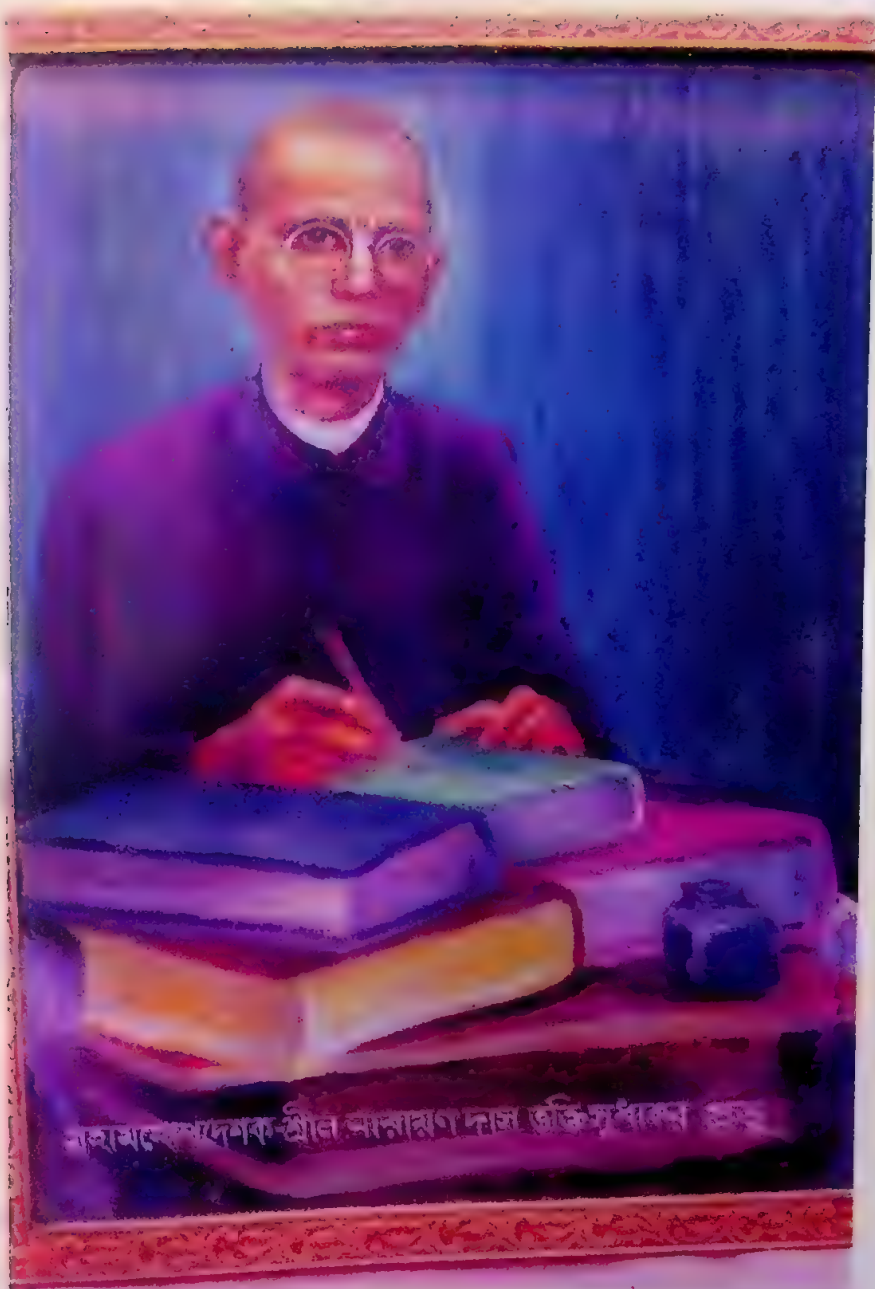
The Flower Samādhi Temple of Srīla Āchāryadeva beside
the Temple of Srī Srī Rādhā Dāmodar, Srīdham Vrindāvan



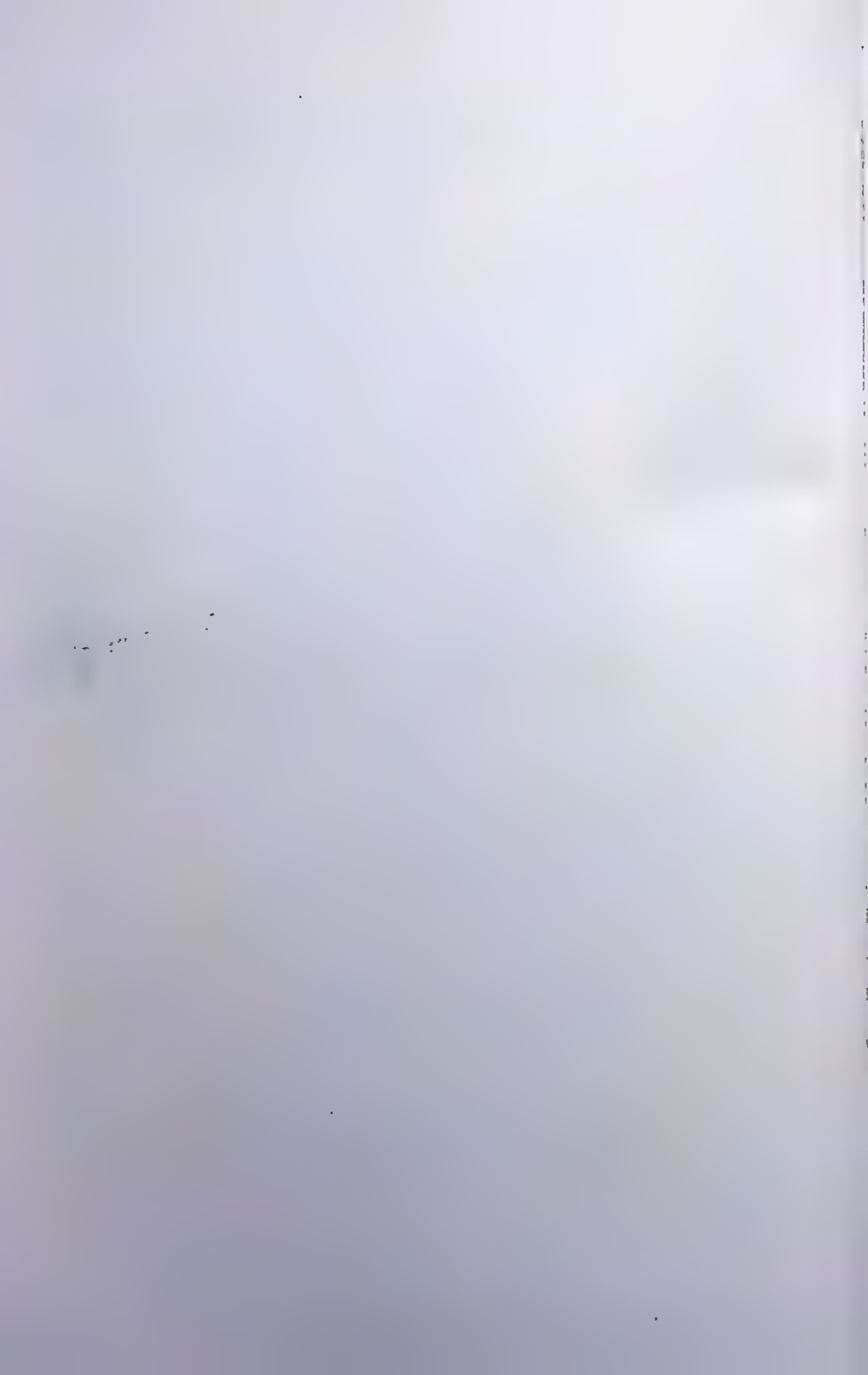


Srila Bhababandhachhid Dās Bhaktisaurav Prabhu,
(Former Additional Secretary of Gaudiya Mission), an associate of
Srila Āchāryadeva.





Srīla Nārāyan Dās Bhaktisudhākar Prabhu
(Prof. N. K. Sanyal, Cuttack Ravenshaw College), an
associate of Srīla Āchāryadeva.



**PRECEPTORIAL LINE
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SUCCESSION
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SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA**

Life and teachings of **Om Vishnupād Paramahansa
108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswāmī
Thākur (Srīla Ananta Vāsudeva Paravidyābhūsan
Prabhu)**, the Successor to **Om Vishnupād 108 Srī
Srīmad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswāmī Thākur.**

By

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ALL GLORY TO LORD GURU AND GOURANGA

PREFACE

*M*ost humbly I make my prostrated obeisances to the holy lotus-feet of the World-Preceptor His Divine Grace Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Bhūsan Bhāratī Goswāmī Thākur, the present Preserver of the Preceptorial Line of Succession and bona fide Successor to my Divine Master *Nityaleelā-pravishta* Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākur.

When the present Preceptor was kind enough to entrust me with the responsibility of writing a book on the transcendental life and teachings of Srīla Āchāryadeva, Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswāmī Thākur, the manifest Other-Self and Divine Successor to Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Goswāmī Thākur, I felt extremely nervous and craved for his causeless mercy. To be frank, I am a petty mortal, very much in the clutches of *Māyā*. Believe me, Revered Readers, it is utterly impossible on the part of an unworthy creature like myself to write the divine life of an Eternal Intimate Associate of the Supreme Lord like Srīla Acharyadeva. This is no Vaishnava humility, but a simple utterance of the truth. My knowledge of English is not adequate and I have faced great trouble in translating technical terms of Vaishnava philosophy into English. Besides, the publication of this book has been delayed by my physical illness, mental lethargy and worldly

preoccupations. For all these shortcomings and offences, I beg the pardon of all the Preceptors, particularly Srila Acharyadeva.

Srila Narahari Chakravorty has written in **Srī Bhaktiratnākara**, (5/3834)—

*'Save Mahābhāgabata-gana ei kay,
Vaishnaver kriyā-mudrā bijne nā bujhay'.*

[All the Great Devotees declare that even a wise man cannot realise the behaviours and activities of a Vaishnava.] Sri Devakinandan Das, a Vaishnava poet, has sung in "**Srī Vaishnava-bandanā**"— 'Vaishnav chinite nāre dever sakati'. [Even gods are incapable of knowing the mysterious character of a Vaishnava.] Srīla Krishnadās Kavirāj has observed—

*'Bhakter prembikār dekhi Krishna chamatkār.
Krishna jār nā pāy anta, kebā chhār ār.'*

[**Srī Chaitanya-Charitāmrita** : Last Part 18/15]

(The Supreme Lord Krishna Himself becomes charmed by beholding the transports of Divine Love of a loving devotee. Such Love is unfathomable even to Krishna, not to speak of the petty creatures of the world.)

Srīla Vrindāban Dās Thākura has written—" *Vaishnava chinite pāre kāhār shakati ?*" [**Srī Chaitanya Bhāgabat**, Middle Part 9/238]. (Who has the power to recognise a Vaishnava ?)

Srila Acharyadeva was the Preceptor of the world and Emperor of Pure Vaishnavas and so it is not possible for any mundane intellectual to realise the glory of his divine character. Even many so-called spiritual giants and so-

called international preachers could not understand his extraordinary behaviours, made blasphemous remarks and committed heinous offence at his lotus-feet. The followers of these persons have inherited that most serious offence from their so-called spiritual guides. Both such a guide and such a disciple will go to eternal hell, as it is stated in **Srī Hari-bhakti-bilās** (1/62) —

*“Jo byakti nyāyarahitam anyāyena shrinoti jah,
Tābubhou Narakam ghoram brajatah kālamakshaym”.*

[Both he who utters unjust words of blasphemy in the guise of a guru and he who listens to those words as a disciple of such a guru are doomed to eternal perdition]. Among all the offences in the spiritual world, the most serious and dangerous one is to regard the Preceptor as a human being. So the **Padma Purān** proclaims— *“Gurushu naramtir jasya bā Nārakī sah.”* (One who considers one’s Guru a human being is a vile offender destined to go to hell.) Srīla Jīva Goswāmī has quoted this verse in his **Srī Bhaktisandarbhā**— *‘Harou rushte Gurustrātā, Gurou rushte na kaschana’*. (If God gets angry, the Preceptor can save, but if the Preceptor is offended, there is none to save the offender).

Om Vishnupād Srīla Bhakti Bhūsan Bhāratī Goswāmī Thākur wanted to publish an English book on Srīla Āchāryadeva long ago, in order to save the innocent souls all over the world from committing any blasphemy or offence at the lotus-feet of Srīla Acharyadeva. Many people today do not know even the simple truth that Srīla Acharyadeva was the nearest and dearest Associate of Srīla Saraswati Thakur and was universally accepted as the Next Spiritual

Head or Immediate Successor to Srila Saraswati Thakur. Detailed discussion in this regard can be found in Chapter No VI of this book.

I have made a rather delayed endeavour to carry out the order of my Sikshā-Guru (Spiritual Teacher), Srila Bhāratī Goswāmī Thākur. For my research-work I have studied many authentic books and old journals and talked to prominent, old Vaishnavas having vast erudition. One such person who helped me immensely was His Holiness Srīpād Jati Sekhar Prabhu, a scholarly disciple of Om Vishnupād Srīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Goswāmī Thakur and former editor of the devotional journal **Paramārthī** introduced by Srila Saraswatī Thākur. Writings of His Holiness Srīla Bhaktisudhākar Prabhu (Prof. Nishikanta Sanyal, M.A. Senior Professor of History, Cuttack Ravenshaw College and a close associate of Srila Saraswati Thakur) inspired me very much. Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu wrote in one part of his personal diary (June 20, 1938)—“It is certain that I shall remain obedient to Srila Acharyadeva even at the cost of my life.” From the writings of His Holiness Srīpad Sundarānanda Prabhu, the famous editor of the **Gaudīya** the weekly devotional journal, introduced by Srila Saraswati Thakur, I have gathered many important materials. A short list of the books and journals from which I have taken direct or indirect help has been given after this Preface.

The present book consists of fifteen chapters. In the first chapter, the Preceptorial Line of Succession (which is vaguely or partially known even to many practitioners of devotion and completely unknown to lay men) has been

clearly mentioned. A short life-sketch of each Divine Master from Sri Srila Mādhavendra Purī to the present Preceptor, Om Vishnupād 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Bhūsan Bhāratī Goswāmī Thākur, has been given. In the next eleven chapters, the various stages and different aspects of the Divine Life of Srila Acharyadeva have been dealt with. In Chapter XIII, some of the comments of Srila Acharyadeva on his Divine Master Om Vishnupad 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Thākur have been compiled. In the next chapter (Chapter XIV) of the book, fifty select messages from Srila Acharyadeva's immortal writings and discourses have been presented for the eternal benefit of the sincere seekers of Truth. The Last Chapter (Chapter XV) of the present book contains a collection of fifteen beautiful letters written by Srila Acharyadeva to his most intimate associate Om Vishnupād Srī Srīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākur.

I pray to every reader to ignore my shortcomings in language and pardon me for other imperfections of the book.

I am grateful to Sripad Balaram Das Brahmachari, Secretary, **Srīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Srīkrishna-Chaitanya Sevāshram** (Regd.) and Sripad Banshibadan Das, a pure *Tyāgī* devotee of the Sevashram, for their constant encouragement, to Sripad Shyamananda Das Brahmachari for supplying vital books and other materials, to Sripad Sudhirkrishna Das Brahmachari for collecting paper and supervising the printing process, to Sripad Srikrishna Chaitanya Das Brahmachari for his assistance in proof-reading. I pay obeisance to my revered father

Sripad Pitambar Das Adhikary (alias Sri Pravash Chandra Sasmal), an octogenarian disciple of *Nityaleela-prabhishta* Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākur, who has gone through the entire manuscript meticulously and corrected several errors that crept into my writings. Last but not least, my thanks are due to Unik Colour Printers, Calcutta for performing computer-related services.

If this book is able to create a little smile on the holy lips of my Divine Master, I shall deem all my labour amply rewarded.

The Holy Advent
Anniversary of
Sri Sri Vishnupriya
Thakurani
February 10, 2000

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ALL GLORY TO LORD GURU AND GAURANGA

SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA

CHAPTER — I

THE PRECEPTORIAL LINE OF SUCCESSION

The *Bhāgavata Dharma* or the Universal Religion of the soul is based on the loving service to The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. The eternal truths of *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* relate to the transcendental region beyond the ken of our sense organs, intellect and mind. One who has got enlightenment from his Guru (Preceptor) can understand and realise them. So only those who belong to the *Āmnāya* (the Preceptorial Line of Succession), themselves being initiated in the hidden truths of the Lord, can enlighten and illuminate the truths and deliver them. The Preceptorial Line thus acquires a special significance. The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chandra says to his intimate devotee Uddhaba in **Srīmad Bhagabatam** (11/17/27).

*“Āchāryam mām bijānīyan-nābamanyeta karhichit,
Na martyabuddhyāsūyeta sarbadeba-mayo Guruh.”*

(Know that I myself appear as the Preceptor. Do not take him as a human being and resent his authority as such. Verily the Preceptor is full of the glory of all the gods.)

That is why the Preceptorial Line of Succession is transcendental. It mercifully descends from Golok (The Abode of Krishna) to Bhulok (this mundane world) for delivering the fallen souls and imparting the Divine Knowledge of the Supreme Truth. This Divine Chain of Preceptors appears on earth by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. If we disregard any of these Preceptors and commit any offence at his lotus-feet, we will simply perish. In order to attain the Supreme Good (i.e. Divine Love), we must know the real Preceptorial Line, submit ourselves to all the Preceptors appearing in this Line and serve them with unflinching faith and devotion. The pseudo-gurus or self-styled, so-called gurus cannot give us the supreme satisfaction of the soul. Their books or lectures may provide our intellectual food. But as they are not Self-realised souls, their words or utterances fail to produce any permanent, tangible good among us. There are now-a-days many pseudo-preachers and teachers in the guise of Guru. They sound forth the words of Srimad Bhagavatam but they cannot convey the spirit ; most beautifully do they speak but they cannot inflame the heart ; they point out the way but they cannot give strength to walk on it. What they can do is only without, but they cannot instruct and enlighten the heart. Such types of preachers have been described as '*Sarāg Baktā*' by Srila Jiva Goswami in his **Bhakti Sandarbha**. Only a Guru in the Preceptorial Line (Amnāya), initiated in the '*Nirasta Kuhakam*' (freed from deceptions), unalloyed and undiluted living Truths treasured in **Srimad-Bhagavatam** and practising them in his own life can teach, enlighten and deliver the peerless treasure of Srimad Bhagavatam for the pleasure of the Lord.

As there are so many stars, but there is only one Sun in the sky, so there may be so many devotees or Vaishnavas, but only one Divine Sun or Preceptor can dispel the darkness of ignorance of the whole world. The true followers of Lord Chaitanya believe in the harmonizing principle of **“One world, One God, One Religion (i.e. Divine Love) and One World-Preceptor”** According to general rule, there cannot be more than one World-Preceptor at the same time in the line of unalloyed devotion. Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur remarks in the **Gaudiya** (9th Vol, 47th Issue, Page 774) — “The Preceptor is the most beloved one of the Supreme Lord. None else in this world is so dear to God. The Preceptor is One. There cannot be plurality of Preceptors.” Somebody may argue that Srīla Narottam, Srīla Srīnivās and Srīla Shyāmānanda acted as World-Preceptors simultaneously. These are exceptional cases and we know that exceptions only prove the general rule. In fact, these three bosom friends were all Nityasiddha or eternal associates of the Lord and were ordained by Srila Jiva Goswami to act as Preceptors. Besides, they were three persons with one soul. In fact the Trio possessed an identical heart. Similarly, Srīla Jagannāth Dās Bābāji, Srīla Thākura Bhaktivinode, Srīla Gourkishore Dās Bābāji and Srīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Thākura were all eternal associates of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and possessed the same heart. So they revealed the *leelā* of World-Preceptors simultaneously.

One may be a Vaishnava of high order, but he cannot do the functions of the Preceptor, unless he is ordained by the Supreme Lord or the previous Preceptor to do so.

Thus the Persons appearing in the Preceptorial Line or Āmnāya Dhārā are God-sent Saints belonging to a Special Category. They are eternal, intimate associates of the Supreme Lord specially empowered by Him to deliver jivas (living beings). The bona fide World-Preceptors perfectly practise and preach this verse of Lord Sri Chaitanya—

*"Trinādapi sunīchena tarorapi sahishtnūnā,
Amāninā mānadena Kīrtanīyah sadā Harih."*

[Srī Shikshāstakām, Verse III.]

(He who is humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, properly honours others and does not want honour himself, is always worthy of chanting the Holy Name). Humility and tolerance are personified in a Jagatguru. The World-Preceptor is as tolerant as Srī Haridās Thākur. He is a bold speaker and worshipper of the Truth in the teeth of the oppositions of the Dark Forces. A true World-preceptor has the spiritual courage to practise the words of Thakur Haridas—

*Khanda Khanda hai deha jāy jadi prān,
Tabu āmi badane nā chhāri Harinām.*

[Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, First part, 16/94]

[Even if my body is shattered into pieces and my life comes to an end, I shall not give up the chanting of the Holy Name.]

The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself is at the Head of this Preceptorial Line: He, out of His causeless and unbounded mercy, revealed the Transcendental Knowledge first to Brahma. In the Eleventh Canto of Srimad

Bhagabatam (11/14/3) Sri Krishna has said to Uddhava, "The divine words known as the Vedas I spoke to Brahma in the beginning. Therein has been stated the principle of unalloyed devotion to My Proper Self, which is the *dharma* (constituent function) of all jivas. The words known as the Vedas are eternal."

Thus the Preceptorial Line starts with the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself. Unless He reveals His own Secret Knowledge, how can the world know It ? So the **Upanishad** says—

*Nāyamātmā prabachanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahunā srutena,
Jamebaisha brinute tena labhya-
stasyaisha Ātmā bibrinute tanūm swām.*

[**Mundak 3/2/3, Katha 2/23**]

(You cannot have the knowledge of the Supreme Soul by means of reasoning, erudition or studying of the Vedas ; Only through causeless mercy does He reveal His own person unto him whom He does accept as His own.)

In the Preceptorial Line the Supreme Wisdom descends and dawns upon the submissive heart of a sincere seeker of Truth. This channel is known as the "*Abaroha or Srouta Panthā*". In the Preceptorial Line of Succession, the legacy of Transcendental Knowledge of Godhead (i.e. the Vedas) which originally emanated from God Himself, is preserved perfectly and uninterruptedly through the long, unbroken, undivided chain or line of accredited Gurus from time immemorial down to the present day. This is an eternal and transcendental line of succession.

The Preceptorial Line has been firmly laid down by Sri Kavikarnapur Goswami in his celebrated work **Srī Gauraganoddesa-dīpikā**. The author of the commentary on the **Vedānta Sūtra**, Sri Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, has also adopted the same succession. Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvatī Thakur has accepted it and it has been mentioned in the book **Gaudīya-kānṭhahār**. Interested readers may go through 'Srī Gaudīya Āmnāya', an illuminating article written by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvatī Thakur and published in the reputed devotional journal, the **Gaudīya** (Vol. 21, Issue 33-35). One may read 'Bhāgabat Pāramparya' published in the book **Sarasvatī Jayasrī** (Page 361) edited by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode and see 'the Guru Paramparā' in the **Gaudīya** (Vol. 17, Issue 29, Page 492). One must notice that the transcendental tradition of Sikṣhā-Gurus has been observed in this Divine Chain of Preceptors. This is essentially "Bhāgabat Paramparā"—not "Pāñcharātrik Paramparā" (i.e., not the Successive Order of Dikṣhā-Gurus).

From **SRI KRISHNA** to **Brahmā**, from Brahma to **Nārada**, from Nārada to **Vyāsadeva**, from Vyāsadeva to **Shukadeva** and **Madhwāchārya**, from Madhwacharya to **Padmanāva**, **Nrihari** and **Mādhava**, from Madhava to **Akṣhaya**, from Akṣhaya to **Jayatīrtha**, from Jayatīrtha to **Jñānasindhu**, from Jñānasindhu to **Dayānidhi**, from Dayānidhi to **Vidyānidhi**, from Vidyānidhi to **Rājendra**, from Rājendra to **Jayadharmā**, from Jayadharmā to **Purushottama**, from Purushottama to **Brahmanyatīrtha**, from Brahmanyatīrtha to **Vyāsatīrtha**, from Vyāsatīrtha to **Lakṣmīpati**, from Lakṣmīpati to **Mādhavendra Purī**

—thus flows down the Sacred Stream of the Preceptorial Line.

The Preceptorial Line from Krishna to Lakshmipati is that of **Baidhī Bhakti** (i.e. Devotion observing scriptural laws). From Madhavendra Purī starts the Unique Preceptorial Line of the Superior **Rāgānugā Bhakti** (i.e. Devotion rising spontaneously from the loving heart).

From Mādhavendra Purī to **SRĪ NITYĀNANDA PRABHU**, **Īshwarpurī** and **Adwaita Prabhu**, from Ishwarpuri to **SRĪ CHAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU**, from Lord Chaitanya to **Swarūpa Dāmodar** and **SRĪ Sanātan Goswāmī**, from Sri Sanatan to **SRĪ Rūpa Goswāmī** from Sri Rupa to **SRĪ Jīva** and **SRĪ Raghunāth**, from Sri Jiva and Sri Raghunath to **SRĪ Krishnadās Kavirāj**, from Krishnadas to **SRĪ Narottam Thākur**, from Norattam to **SRĪ Bishwanāth Chakrabartī** from Bishwanath to **SRĪ Baladev Vidyābhūsan**, from Sri Vidyabhusan to **SRĪ Uddhav Dās**, from Sri Uddhav to **SRĪ Madhusūdan Das**, from Sri Madhusudan to **Vaishnavasārbabhouma SRĪ Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj**, from **SRĪ Jagannath** to **SRĪ Bhāgabāt Dās** and **SRĪ Bhaktivinode Thākur**, from Sri Bhaktivinode to **SRĪ Gourkishore Dās Bābājī Mahārāj**, from Sri Gourkishore to **SRĪ Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Thākur**, from Srila Saraswati Thakur to **Srīla Āchāryadeva Srīmad Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswāmī Thākur** (**Srīla Ananta Vāsudeva Paravidyābhūsan Prabhu**), from Srila Puri Goswami Thakur to **Srīla Bhakti Pradip Tīrtha Goswāmī** and **Srīla Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākur**, from Srila Audulomi Thakur to **Srīla**

Bhakti Bhūsan Bhāratī Goswāmī Thākura — in this channel the Preceptorial Line has been flowing till now and this Transcendental Line will be continuing for ever by the boundless mercy of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Now we will try to give a brief life-sketch of each Preceptor appearing in the Preceptorial Line of **Rāgānugā Bhakti**.

SRĪ MĀDHABENDRA PURĪ

*"Jay Srī Mādhav Purī Krishna-premapūr,
Bhakti-kalpatarur tenho pratham ankur."*

[Sri Chaitanyacharitamrita, First Part ; 9/10]

[All glory to Sri Madhab Puri, who is full of Divine Love for Sri Krishna and who is the First Sprout of the Wish-yeilding Tree of Devotion.]

Sri Madhabendra Puri was always absorbed in the Transcendental Mood of Separation from Krishna. A piece of cloud would remind him of his most beloved Krishna and he would cry aloud and faint. In Vrindāvan, Krishna came to him in the guise of a cowherd boy and offered him milk. Krishna gave him directions in a dream and accordingly he discovered the Deity of Gopal hidden in a dense grove. Sri Madhabendra arranged for the famous Annakūt Mahotsav (i.e. the Great Festival of Grand Feast) and '*Bahudiner kshudāy Gopāl khāila sakal*' (Sri C.C.Middle 4/76). [i.e. Gopal who had been hungry for a long period ate up the huge quantity of food.] In Remuna, Lord Gopīnāth stole thickened milk for Madhabendra and became famous as "*Kshīrachorā*" (i.e. the Thief of thickened milk).

At the time of his departure from the world, Srila Madhabendra Puri uttered the following verse :

*"Ayi Dīnadayārdra-nātha he
Mathurānātha kadābalokyase,
Hridayam Twadalokakātaram
Dayita bhrāmyati kim karomyaham."*

[Sri C.C.Middle 4/197]

(O Kind Master of the Poor! O Lord of Mathura! When shall I behold you ? My heart is heavy with sorrow as I can't see your face. My heart is wandering restlessly. O My Beloved Lord ! What shall I do now ?)

The Gaudiya Vaishnavas regard this verse as the supreme utterance of the Transcendental Mood of Separation in Divine Love. It was a favourite verse of the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar Himself.

LORD NITYĀNANDA

*"Sarba-abafārī Krishna Swayam-Bhagabān,
Tānhār dwitīya deha Srī Balarām.
Sei Krishna Navadwīpe Srī Chaitanya-Chandra,
Sei Balarām sange Srī Nityānanda."*

[Sri C.C.First, 5/46]

(Krishna is the Absolute Godhead, the Supreme Fountainhead of All Descents. Sri Balaram is His Second Self..... . That Krishna appeared in Nabadwip as Sri Chaitanyachandra. That Balaram came along with Him as Sri Nityananda.)

No one can attain the grace of Lord Goursundar without taking refuge at the Lotus-feet of Lord Nityananda. He is

the Custodian of Divine Love. He is the Fountainhead of all Preceptors. He is the Manifestive Aspect of the Supreme Lord—the Transparent Medium through Whom we can visualize and realize the real Form, Attributes, Entourage and Pastimes of the Supreme Lord.

He appeared in a devout Brahmin family in a village named Ekchākā in Bengal. His father was Sri Hārāi Pandit and his mother Sri Padmābatī Devī. Once a Vaishnava Sannyasi came to their house and begged their only son. Thus Nityananda renounced the world at a tender age and wandered all over India as a pilgrim. While travelling in the Western region of India, he came across Sri Madhabendra Puri. Both were elated with joy of divine love. Nityananda spent some days with Madhabendra, happily discoursing on Krishna. Then again began the Pilgrim's progress. When he came to Vrindaban, he madly searched for Krishna in every grove, every temple. Knowing that Krishna has appeared as Gour in Nabadwip, he finally rushed to Nabadwip. When Lord Gouranga and Lord Nityananda met at the house of Sri Nandan Āchārya, the joys of the devotees knew no bounds.

Nityananda stayed in the house of Sribas Pandit. He distributed the Gift of Gour (i.e. Divine Love) among one and all without any consideration. His mercy surpassed even that of Lord Goursundar. He rescued two notorious sinners, Jagai and Madhai who did not hesitate to shed His sacred blood by hitting Him on the head. He went from door to door and entreated everyone to chant the name of Krishna.

Lord Nityananda assisted Lord Gouranga in all His *leelas*. When the latter revealed His Sannyās-*leeṭā*, Nityananda went to Puri as His companion and stayed with Him for some period. Then at the directions of Lord Goursundar, Nityananda came to Bengal and inundated all with the deluge of Divine Love. When He met Sri Adwaitacharya Prabhu at his house in Santipur, both of them shed tears of love and joy. It was Adwaita at whose tearful call of fervent love, the Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya descended on earth. And it was Nityananda who distributed the Supreme Lord among all without any discrimination. Śrī Lochan Dās Thākur has aptly sung :

*"Dīna hīna patita pāmara nāhi bāchhe,
Brahmār durlav prem sabākāre jāche."*

(Divine Love is a rare treasure even to Brahma. Nityananda offered that Love to all including the poor, the fallen and the sinful.)

Sri Narattom Thakur has written :

*"Nītāi-Karunā have Braje Rādhā-Krishna pābe
Dhara Nītāi-charan dukhāni."*

(By the grace of Nitai, you can attain Radha and Krishna in Vrindaban. So firmly seize the lotus - feet of Lord Nityananda.)

ŚRĪ ĪSWARPURĪ

Sri Ishwarpuri was the dearest disciple of Sri Madhabendra Puri. He appeared in a Brahmin family in Kumarhatta, Bengal.

He served his most beloved Gurudeva with great love and care. In his own hands, he used to cleanse the stool

and urine of his Divine Master, considering everything of his Gurudeva as transcendental. Apart from this "*Paricharyā Sevā*" or physical service, he would also render "*Prasanga Sevā*" or service in the form of discourse. He used to make him always hear the Names and Pastimes of Krishna. Very pleased with his service, Sri Madhabendra gave him an affectionate embrace and blessed him with these words— "May you attain Divine Love for Krishna." With this benediction of his Gurudeva, Sri Iswarpuri became 'Premer Sāgar' or "the Ocean of Love".

Once Sri Iswarpuri came to Nabadwip in a hidden manner. He went to the place of Srila Adwaita Acharya and sat quietly. Sri Mukunda Datta, an associate of Sri Gouranga, began to sing a sweet song of Krishna. Hearing this Iswarpuri fell down on the ground in an ecstasy of love. Seeing this sign, everyone learnt that the newcomer was no other than the great Loving Vaishnava Sannyasi, Sri Ishwarpuri. Sri Adwaita Prabhu embraced him with great affection.

Oneday Sri Ishwarpuri happened to meet Sri Goursundar while the latter was returning home from school. He gazed at Gour in joy and wonder. Sri Goursundar offered His obeisances to the lotus-feet of Sri Iswarpuri and invited him to His house. Gour lovingly washed his feet and fed him various types of delicious food, cooked by His mother and offered to Krishna. At last Sri Goursundar took the leavings of that food. Then both of them discoursed on Krishna for some time and relished the bliss of Divine Love.

Oneday Ishwarpuri asked Goursundar to go through his book *Srī Krishna-leelāmṛita* and correct the errors. Lord Gouranga smilingly said—"The poems of a devotee are very much loved by Krishna. To see any fault in the writings of a devotee is an offence." Ishwarpuri became highly pleased.

Sri Goursundar next met Ishwarpuri in the holy Gayādhām where He came on the pretext of offering oblation to His deceased father. Sri Goursundar prostrated Himself on the ground and totally submitted Himself to Sri Ishwarpuri and begged initiation from him. (Sri Goursundar was the Supreme Lord Himself. Still He revealed this *leela* in order to teach the world the importance of taking shelter of a bona fide Guru).

Srila Ishwarpuri gladly gave him initiation. Oneday Sri Goursundar fed Ishwarpuri self-cooked rice and dressed his body with sandal-paste, garlands etc. Thus the Supreme Lord Himself taught the ideals of serving the Spiritual Master with love and devotion. On his way back home from Gaya, Goursundar came to visit the Birthsite of Sri Ishwarpuri at Kumārhatta. He rolled on the sacred ground and shed tears of love. At the time of departure He collected the holy dust of that place and said—"This sacred dust is as dear as my life itself".

SRĪ ADWAITĀCHĀRYA

"Mahāviṣṇur jagatkartā māyayā jah srijatyadah,
Tasyābatāra ebāyam Adwaitāchārya Ishwarah."

[Sri C.C.First Part 1/12]

Thus from *Sri Chaitanyacharitamrita* we come to learn that Sri Adwaitacharya is the Descent of Mahavishnu, the Lord of the Universe, Who creates this universe with the help of *Māyā* (the External Deluding Potency of the Lord). Why is He called Adwaitacharya? In the next verse of *Sri Chaitanyacharitamrita* Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj has given us the reply—

'Adwaitam Harinādwaitād, Āchāryam Bhaktishamsanāt.'

As he is identical with Hari, his name is 'Adwaita'. As he is a teacher of unalloyed devotion, he is called 'Āchārya'.

Srila Adwaitacharya Prabhu appeared in Nabagrām in the district of Srīhatta. Srī Kuver Mishra and Srīmatī Nāvādevī were his parents. His father changed residence and came to Shantipur and began to live on the bank of the holy Ganges. The boyhood name of Srila Adwaita Prabhu was 'Kamalāksha' (i.e. The Lotus - eyed). He was brought up with great care and affection by his loving father who himself taught him many scriptures. When Adwaita Prabhu lost his parents, he went on a pilgrimage to Gaya and other sacred places. After his return, he was requested by his relatives to marry. Accordingly he married "Srī Devī" and "Sītā Devī", two devout daughters of Srī Nrisingha Bhādurī, a wealthy and religious Brahmin. Sri Devi was the Manifestive Aspect of Jogamāyā, the Internal Potency of the Lord. And Sita Devi was no other than the Descent of Jogamāyā Herself.

Sri Adwaita Prabhu built a house in Srī Māyāpur for spending his days in discoursing on Krishna with the loving

devotees. There Srila Adwaita Prabhu would daily read and explain scriptures like the Gītā, the Bhāgavat etc. His kind heart wept at the sight of the miseries of *Kali*-afflicted creatures. For their deliverance he began to pray to Krishna with profuse tears, water of the Ganges and leaves of the Holy Tulasi Plant. In response to his call of love, Sri Krishnachandra came down as Sri Gourchandra from Golok (i.e. The Absolute Abode of Krishna) to Bhulok (i.e. earth).

When the Supreme Lord descended as the Son of Sri Jagannath Mishra in Sri Mayapur, Sri Adwaita Prabhu, then staying in Shantipur, realised that Divine Appearance in his heart. His joys knew no bounds and he sent Sita Thakurani immediately to the house of Sri Mishra. Later on, he was ceremonially united with Lord Goursundar. He worshipped the Lotus-feet of the Lord with various items, sang the glories of the Lord and offered innumerable obeisances to Him. When the Lord was pleased to confer a boon, Sri Adwaita Prabhu said—“If you want to distribute your Treasure of Love, kindly distribute It among the women, the people of low standard, the ignorant and all such undeserving people.” The Supreme Lord granted this prayer of Srila Adwaitacharya Prabhu and gave away His Gift of Love to all and sundry.

SRĪ CHAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU

(Partly adapted from Srimad B.P.Tirtha Goswami Thakur's speech delivered in a meeting of Andhra Association, Calcutta on 22.9.40)

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (Who is no other than the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself) is the Father of Gaudiya Vaishnava Community. He is called '*Vipralambha Vighraha*' or the Supreme Form of the Feeling of Separation. Though He is Krishna Himself, He appeared in this world in the role of a Devotee pining for Krishna and taught the best way to serve Krishna. That way is '*Vipralambha Nām-Sankīrtan*' (as revealed in His celebrated '*Srī Shikshāshatakam*'). '*Vipralambha*' means Feelings of Separation from Krishna and '*Nam-Sankirtan*' means pure and proper chanting of the Names of Krishna. This is the distinguishing feature of the *bhajan* of the Gaudiya Vaishnava Community. In fact, the bona fide followers of Lord Chaitanya or 'Gaur' are called 'Gaudiya'.

Sri Krishna appeared as Sri Gauranga in order to (1) taste the glory of Sri Radha's Love for Him, (2) to realise His wonderful sweetness which Sri Radha tastes and (3) to know the nature of Sri Radha's bliss that arises from the realisation of His sweetness. This was the secret purpose of the Descent of Lord Gauranga. To this was added the secondary purpose of delivering the *Kali*-afflicted creatures and distributing the Divine Love through *Nām-Sankīrtan*, the Special Dispensation of *Kali Yuga*.

When the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya made His Most Auspicious Advent into this world about 513 years ago, the socio-religious condition of the country was very deplorable. Men of affluence wasted their wealth in frivolous pursuits. The so-called *Pandits* engaged themselves in barren polemic discussions. The ordinary people revelled in gambling, carousing, merry-making,

adultery and slaughter of animals. The voice of the people was considered as the Voice of God. The religious cult in vogue was the worshipping of sundry gods actuated by selfish motives. Out of Infinite Causeless Mercy to fallen souls, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna appeared as Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in order to re-establish *Sanātana Dharma* or the eternal Religion of Divine Love.

It was on the full moon night in the month of February, 1486, when there was lunar eclipse and the people of Bengal began to chant the Name of Sri Hari, that the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu appeared in the house of Jagannāth Mishra and Sachī Devī in *Srīdham Māyāpur*. The crying of the Divine Child never stopped for a moment until the ladies and gentlemen of *Sridham Mayapur* who had assembled at Jagannath Mishra's house began to chant the Holy Name. In this way the Lord gave an indication that His Mission was to spread all over the world *Nāma-Sankīrtana*, the Yuga-Dharma or the Universal Church of the age. So, the Lord is called the "KALIYUGA PĀVANĀVATĀRĪ" or the Supreme Redeemer and Saviour in *Kali Yuga*, the Black Age of sin and sorrow, discord and strife.

It is only the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Who, in the Role of the Acharya or the World-Teacher, saves and redeems the people of the world from the terrible grip of *Kali* by means of *Nāma-Sankīrtana*.

When the Lord was only a Boy of ten, He mastered all the branches of Sanskrit learning and defeated the world-champion scholar, Keshava Kāshmīrī, who ultimately

became one of the staunch followers of the Lord. The Lord's reputation as a great Professor spread far and wide. At that time He was known as 'Srī Nimāi Pandit'.

At Gaya, the Lord surrendered Himself to and accepted initiation from Sri Ishwar Puri, a great Vaishnava Sannyasi. The Lord was God Himself and needed no initiation from anyone. But He revealed this *leelā* in order to teach us the supreme importance of surrendering to the Preceptor. Returning to Navadwip, He began to reveal Himself. Nothing but the Names of Krishna came out of His lips. He began to weep and lament for Krishna and fainted in ecstatic Love for Krishna. Thus ended the Lord's play of teaching and 'Sankirtan' began.

Some Hindus belonging to the anti-devotional school, brought a complaint against the Lord to Chānd Kāzī, the then Governor of the City of Navadwip, that He (Lord Chaitanya) was ruining the Hindu Religion by introducing the new Cult of *Nāma-Sankīrtana*. Chand Kazi got enraged and broke the *Khols* (musical instruments) of the *Nāmakīrtana* party. When this news was brought to the notice of the Lord, He took out a huge Sankirtana-procession consisting of all the devotees of Navadwip with lighted torches in their hands and arrived at the house of Chand Kazi. Chand Kazi got frightened, but on being given assurance of safety, he came out and had some discussions with the Lord. When the Kazi was fully convinced of the truth of the Doctrine of the Lord, he joined the banner of *Nama-Sankirtana*. This conversion of Chand Kazi, the then spiritual preceptor of Husain Shāh, the Nawab of Bengal, spread the name and fame of the Lord.

The Lord spent 24 years of His Divine Career as an ideal Brahmachari and an ideal Householder after which He renounced the world and accepted Sannyasa from Keshava Bhāratī of Kātwā.

The Lord came to Puri and in the Temple of Jagannāth, He fell into an ecstatic swoon while rushing to embrace Lord Jagannatha. At that time Sārbabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, the greatest Vedantist and savant of the time, was present in the Temple. He carried the Lord to his house and attended to Him. In the discourse held between the Lord and Sarbabhauma, the Lord totally smashed the theory of non-differentiated Monism of the Advaita school of Benares. In a few days Sarbabhauma Bhattacharya was converted into Vaishnavism.

From Puri the Lord proceeded towards the South and met Rāy Rāmānanda, the Governor of Vidyānagar. The discourse that took place between Ray Ramananda and the Supreme Lord at Kavur, is the brightest jewel in the field of Vaishnava Literature and Philosophy.

Thence the Lord proceeded further south and converted all the different sects and creeds into Vaishnavism by His Super-human power of deep penetration and conviction in *Shastric* lore. Then He returned to Puri and from Puri He went to Benares where he converted Prakāśhānanda Saraswatī, the leader of 60,000 Sannyasis, into Vaishnavism.

Then the Lord sent His two Lieutenants, Sīt Rūpa and Sīt Sanātana to Vrindavana and Mathura to explore the hidden Sportive Places of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna

and to write Theological Codes and Treatises on the Cult of Pure Bhakti.

The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya spent the last 18 years of His Divine Career at Puri in tasting the Love in Separation for Sri Krishna as tasted by Sṛī Rādhā, the Consort of Lord Krishna, in the company of Rāy Rāmānanda and Sṛī Swarūp Dāmodar, the two illustrious adepts in the Transcendental Love-Games of the Divine Couple of Vraja.

The Matchless Beauty of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya and the Doctrine of Divine Love through *Nama-Sankirtana* as preached by Him attracted all the people of the world. Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the Eternal Combined Manifestation of Sri Radhika and Sri Krishna in One Body entirely Spiritual. He is Krishna inside enveloped by the Golden Glow of Sri Radha's Body and Her Feeling of Separation-in-Love for Sri Krishna outside. Sri Radha, the Predominated Counterwhole of the Absolute Person Sri Krishna, is the Divine Embodiment of *Mahābhāba*, the highest pitch or culmination of Divine Love. Separation-in-love for Sri Krishna is the characteristic feature of Her inner Nature. Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, displaying the Role of Sri Radha, is found deeply absorbed in Sri Radha's Separation-in-love for Sri Krishna. In the Role of Sri Radha, the Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya tastes Her Love for Sri Krishna.

Thakur Bhaktivinode has summed up the teachings of Lord Chaitanya in his famous '*Sṛī Dashamūl*' or Ten Cardinal Principles. First, the message of the Vedas which

comes down in the Preceptorial line of Succession is called 'Āmnāya'. The Vedas and the scriptures like Sṛīmad Bhāgabatam, which are loyal to the Vedas, are the supreme authority. Secondly, it has been pronounced by this supreme authority that Sri Krishna is the Supreme Truth. Thirdly, Sri Krishna is Omnipotent. Fourthly, Sri Krishna is the Nectar-Ocean of all kinds of Divine Blisses. Fifthly, all Jiva-souls are detachable infinitesimal particles of the Marginal Potency of Krishna, the Infinite Absolute. Sixthly, certain souls are enthralled by *Maya*, the illusory energy of the Lord. Seventhly, certain souls are freed from the grasp of *Maya*. Eighthly, the entire world (both material and spiritual) is simultaneously distinct and non-distinct from Krishna—which is an inconceivable truth to human intellect. According to Lord Chaitanya, all the spiritual worlds like *Vaikuntha*, *Golok* etc., the mundane universe and all *Jivas* (living beings) emanate from the Lord's internal *Chit* Potency, external *Māyā* Potency and marginal *Jīva* Potency respectively and are situated in an '*Achintya Bhedābheda*' relation with Krishna. Ninthly, Unalloyed Devotion is the only Means of attaining the End and Tenthly, Divine Love for Krishna is the Supreme End or Goal or Summum Bonum of spiritual life.

The Supreme Lord Sri Sri Gaursundar teaches us that in Bhakti cult, the Means as well as the End are identical and that the foremost and highest Means of attaining that End is '*Nāma-sankīrtan*'. For, in *Kali Yuga*, Krishna descends as the Holy Name. The Holy Name redeems the whole world. The sum and substance of all *śāstras* is that the Holy Name is the Quintessence of all *Mantras*

in all religions. Thrilled with extreme delight Sriman Mahaprabhu spoke, "Listen, O Swarūp and Rāma Rāy, the highest and the most cogent panacea of world-disease in this *Kali Yuga* is the chanting of the Holy Name of Krishna". *Nama-Sankirtan* destroys all evils and creates all kinds of bliss and rapturous love in Krishna as well. *Nama-Sankirtan* generates all kinds of Bhakti and purifies the heart from all worldly affinities and afflictions. Therefore, always chant the Name even at meals, in bed, here, there and everywhere. *Nama-Sankirtan* is not restricted to any particular place, time or person. *Nama-Sankirtan* works everywhere. *Nama-Sankirtan* is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent. *Nama-Sankirtan* is one and the same with the Absolute Person Sri Krishna.

Thus the Supreme Lord spoke in His ***Shikshāstakam*** (Sriman Mahaprabhu has left the divine heritage of His teachings in eight succinct verses celebrated as the *Shikshāstakam*.)—

Verse I :

May the chanting of the Holy Name of Sri Krishna be glorified, which (1) sweeps off all the dirt from the mirrors of our hearts, (2) extinguishes the great forestfire of suffering from the cycle of births and deaths, (3) sheds moonlight upon the lily of eternal good, (4) is the very life of the bride of real learning, (5) swells the Ocean of Ecstatic Bliss, (6) gives the full taste of pure nectar at every utterance of the Holy Name and (7) bathes, i.e., purifies and refreshes the whole self including the body, mind and soul in Divine Bliss.

Verse II :

O Almighty Supreme Lord! Thou hast, out of Thy Infinite Mercy, given to the world a multiplicity of Thy Names, endowed Each of The Names with all Thy Potencies and made no restrictions as to the time, place, etc. of Their recitation and remembrance. But alas! such is my ill-luck that I have no love for chanting Thy Names.

Verse III :

He, who is humbler than a blade of grass, is more forbearing than a tree and honours others without any desire of honouring himself, is ever worthy of chanting the Holy Name.

Verse IV :

No riches, no friends or relatives, no beautiful woman or mundane erudition and poesy do I pray Thee for, but may my heart ever cling to Thee, O Supreme Lord, out of selfless devotion and love, whenever and wherever I may be born.

Verse V :

O Nanda's Son ! Have pity on this Thy servant sunk in the dread ocean of the world. Look on me as a particle of dust on Thy lotus-feet.

Verse VI :

O Lord ! When will tears flow down incessantly from my eyes, when shall I speak in a choked voice and when will my body become thrilled with ecstasy at the time of chanting Thy Names ?

Verse VII :

My eyes are running with tears like the rainy sky. A moment is as long to me as an aeon. The absence of Govinda has made the universe empty to me.

Verse VIII :

Whether Krishna, my Beloved, hugs me in His sweet embrace or tramples me under His Feet, or torments me by keeping Himself away from me, gratifying His Amours in whatever manner He likes, He and none else is the Lord of my life.

SRĪ SWARŪP DĀMODAR

Sri Swarup Damodar Goswami is an Eternal Companion of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. His previous name was Sri Purushottam Acharya. He used to live in Navadwip and was a constant companion of Mahaprabhu. When the Lord revealed His Sannyās-*leeḷā*, Sri Purushottam became almost mad and took Sannyās from a Sannyāsī named Sri Chaitanyānanda in Venaras. Then he came to *Srīdhām* Puṛī with the order of his Sannyas-guru and was re-united with Mahaprabhu.

Sri Swarup Damodar was the Second Self of Mahaprabhu. He was an erudite scholar of scriptures. He possessed an extra-ordinary talent in music. When somebody composed some verse or song, it was first examined by Sri Swarup Damodar and then placed before Mahaprabhu with the former's approval.

Srī Rāy Rāmānanda was the bosom friend of Srī Swarūp Damodar Prabhu. Both these two associates

of Lord Goursundar rendered the most intimate, confidential service of love to the Lord in the Last Part of His Divine Life.

Rāmānander Krishnakathā Swarūper gān.
Biraha-bedanāy Prabhur rākhaye parān.

[Sri C.C.Last Part 6/6]

(The talks on Krishna by Ramananda and the songs of Swarup would preserve the life of the Lord in the period of pangs of separation.)

Sri Swarup Damodar was such an intimate associate of the Lord that he could read and realise the inner thoughts of Mahaprabhu and in keeping with His Mood, he would sing songs of Vidyāpati, Chandidās and *Srī Gītāgobinda* in order to soothe the love-lorn heart of the Lord. As Lalita and Visākhā were extremely dear and close to *Srīmatī Rādhārānī*, so were Swarup Damodar and Ray Ramananda to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

SRI SANĀTAN GOSWĀMĪ

Among the Six Goswamins of Sri Vrindavan, Srila Sanatan Goswami was the eldest. He appeared as the son of Sri Kumar Deva in an aristocratic Brahmin family of Karnat. Sri Sanatan and his younger brother, Sri Rupa, got the titles of '*Sākar-mallik*' and '*Dabirkhās*' respectively in the court of the Sultan of Bengal, Husain Shah and held the post of Royal Ministers. Beholding Sri Goursundar at Rāmkelī, both the brothers became anxious to renounce the world. Mahaprabhu changed their names. *Sakar-mallik* and *Dabirkhas* became known as Sri Sanatan and Sri Rupa respectively.

Sri Sanatan pretended to be ill and began to discuss the teachings of the Bhagabatam daily at home with devout scholars. One day the Sultan paid a surprise-visit to the house of Sri Sanatan and found him in that condition. Knowing that Sanatan was no more willing to serve the Sultan, he imprisoned Sanatan. Sri Rupa left Rāmkeḷi before this. In a secret letter he informed Sanatan of the news of Mahaprabhu's visit to Vrindavan and advised him to become free at any cost and go to Vrindavan. Sanatan offered his Muslim jailor a sum of seven thousand Rupees and freed himself. Then he came in disguise to Kāshī where Lord Goursundar was staying in Chandra Shekhar's house. When Sanatan sat down at the gate, the Lord rushed out and embraced him in rapture. At His touch Sanatan was overcome by love and cried out in a faltering voice, "Touch me not ! Touch me not !". The two wept ceaselessly, clasping each other's neck to the wonder of Chandra Sekhar.

On the Dashāshwamedh-ghāt of Kashi or Benaras, Lord Goursundar affectionately infused divine strength into the heart of Sanatan and taught him 'Sādhya-sāadhan Tattwa' or the Divine Knowledge of the Ultimate Goal and the Means to reach it.

Sri Goursundar entrusted Sanatan with the four-fold service of supreme importance— (1) to establish the principles of unalloyed devotion, (2) to discover the hidden holy places of *Mathurāmandal* and ascertain the Sites of Divine Pastimes, (3) to reveal the Deities (Holy Images) of the Absolute in Vrindavan and (4) to compile the Code of Vaishnava law and introduce rules of proper conduct of a Vaishnava. According to the directions of Lord Sri

Chaitanya, Sri Sanatan went to Sri Vrindavan and revealed the *leela* of Adoration of Krishna with extreme humility, intense longing, piteous wailings and utmost renunciation born of deep Love - in - separation from Krishna. Thus Sanatan preached and propagated the gospels of Sri Chaitanya and fulfilled His purpose.

Sanatan came to *Srīdhām* Purī to have a *darshan* (i.e. sight) of Mahaprabhu and stayed with Sri Haridas Thakur, another intimate associate of Sri Goursundar. The humility of both Sanatan and Haridas beggared description and the heart of Mahaprabhu would simply melt at this. Sri Sanatan again visited Sri Vrindavan in obedience to the Lord's orders and manifested the unparalleled ideal of the highest *Haribhajan* in the company of his eternal near and dear ones like Sri Rupa, Sri Raghunath Das, Sri Raghunath Bhatta, Sri Gopal Bhatta etc. Sri Sanatan Goswami Prabhu revealed the divine service of the Deity of Sri Madangopal in a place named "*Āditya-tilā*" on the bank of the river Jamuna in Sri Vrindavan.

Among the immortal books written by Srila Sanatan Prabhu, mention should be made of *Sri Brihad-Bhāgabatamritam* (with its *Digdarshinī* Annotations), *Srī Haribhaktibilās* (with its *Digdarshini* Annotations, *Srī Krishna-leelā-staba* and the *Brihad-Vaishnavatoshanī* commentary of the Tenth Canto of *Srimad Bhāgabatam*.

SRĪ RŪPA GOSWĀMĪ

"*Srī Chaitanya-mano'bhī shtam sthāpitam jena bhūtale,
So'yam Rūpah Kadā majham dadāti swapadāntikam.*"

(Sri Rupa Goswami fulfilled the desire of Lord Chaitanya's heart on earth. When will that Rupa be kind enough to give me shelter at his lotus-feet ?)

Srila Narottam Thakur has sung the glory of Srila Rupa Goswami in this succinct verse in the *Mangalācharan* (Auspicatory Observance) of his *Srī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā*. Lord Goursundar descended on earth in order to offer to the creatures of this world the unique treasure of the Highest and Brightest Bliss of Divine Love, which was never before distributed in this world. It was Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhu who revealed in this world that very secret and personal property of Love belonging to Sri Krishna.

Srila Kabikarnapur has said in his *Gouraganoddeshadīpikā* that Srī Rupa Manjarī, the most intimate, loving attendant of Srimati Radharani, appeared as Sri Rupa Goswami. In fact, no one can attain the rarest fortune of serving the Divine Couple Sri Sri Rādhā Govinda in Sri Vrindavan without the allegiance of Srila Rupa Goswami. Among the famous Six Goswamins of Vrindavan, the name of Sri Rupa comes first. If we want to realise the munificence and sweetness of Sri Sri Gour-Krishna, we must owe allegiance to the Followers of Srila Rupa Goswami.

Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan were two brothers. They possessed extraordinary qualities of head and heart. The Sultan of Bengal, Husain Shah, forcefully made them his Royal Ministers. They began to stay at Ramkeli, the capital of Bengal. At that time, Lord Goursundar manifested His *leela* of Congregational Chanting of the Names of Hari in

company with His devotees in *Sridham Nabadwip*. Eager to meet the Lord and renounce the world, Sri Rupa once wrote a letter to Him with the prayer for beholding His lotus-feet. Mahaprabhu replied. "As an immoral woman constantly thinks of her paramour while living in the midst of her family, so do thou silently and ceaselessly meditate on God while doing your worldly work. Soon Krishna will have mercy on you."

When Mahaprabhu took sannyas and came to Ramkeli to favour Rupa and Sanatan, the two brothers wore a very poor dress and humbly held two blades of grass in their teeth and came to the lotus-feet of the Lord. They rolled down on the ground at the Lord's feet and began to weep bitterly. The Lord said with great affection, "You are my eternal servitors. From today both of you will be known as Rupa-Sanatan. Don't weep so humbly. It rends my heart."

Afterwards Sri Rupa was reunited with Mahaprabhu at Prayag where the Lord infused His strength into the heart of Sri Rupa and taught him the Ontology of Krishna, the Principles of Unalloyed Devotion, the Transcendental Science of Blissful Love and the essence of Srimad Bhagabatam in a nutshell for ten days. At last the Lord said, "I have spoken to you of only one drop of the shoreless, profound ocean of devotion, in order to give you a smack of it. You will delineate it in details. While meditating on this, your heart will be illuminated by Krishna. Through Krishna's grace, even an ignorant man reaches the farthest shore of the ocean of the nectar of devotion." Sri Rupa composed many unique books based on the teachings of Lord Chaitanya.

Sri Rupa was reunited with Lord Chaitanya at *Sridham* Puri. Once Mahaprabhu recited a cryptic verse of love at the time of Car Festival. Sri Rupa was able to follow the heart of the Lord and composed a similar verse in keeping with the secret Mood of Mahaprabhu. The Lord was overjoyed to find the verse written on a palm-leaf and hidden in the thatch of Sri Rupa's cottage.

While Sri Rupa was writing his famous play '*Srī Bidagdhamādhab*' Mahaprabhu highly praised the exceptionally beautiful handwriting of Sri Rupa and particularly praised the verse glorifying the sweetness of Krishna's Name— "*Tunde Tandabinī ratim.....etc.*"

In order to carry out the order of the Lord, Sri Rupa came to Sri Vrindavan. He lived homeless, sleeping every night under a different tree. He chew dry bread or gram and always chanted Krishna's Names. At times he composed works on Devotion, heard discourses about Mahaprabhu and meditated on Him. He had the beggar's gourd in his hand and tattered quilt on his body. Sri Rupa revealed many hidden holy places with the help of various scriptures. He also revealed the Deity of Sri Govindadev. His famous books include *Srī Bhakti-rasāmritasindhu*, *Srī Ujjwalnīlmani*, *Srī Hamsadūt*, *Srī Uddhab-sandesh*, *Srī krishna-janmatithi-bidhi*, *Srī Rādhā-Krishna-ganod-deshadīpikā*, *Srī Stabamālā*, *Srī Bidagdhamādhab*, *Srī Lalitamādhab*, *Srī Dānkelikoumudi*, *Srī Padyābali*, *Srī Natak-chandrikā*, *Srī Laghu-Bhāgabātamrita*, *Srī Upadeshāmrita etc.*

*Srī*la Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī has sung the transcendental glory of the holy dust of the lotus-feet of

Srila Rupa Goswami in his famous book '*Muktāchariṭ*' in this way—

*"Ādadānastrinam dantairidam jāche punah punah,
Sṛīmad-Rūpa-padāmbhoja-dhūlih syām janma janmani."*

[Holding a blade of grass in my teeth, I pray repetitively that I may become a particle of dust of the lotus-feet of Srimad Rupa Goswami.]

SṚĪ JĪVĀ GOSWĀMĪ

Sri Jiva Goswamipad was the only son of Sri Anupam, the youngest brother of Sri Sanatan and Sri Rupa. He appeared in '*Bāklā Chandradwīp*'. From his very boyhood, Sri Jiva was enamoured of Srimad Bhagabatam. Within a short period he secured the topmost position in the knowledge of all scriptures. When Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan revealed their *leela* of dwelling in Vrindavan and specially after the disappearance of Lord Goursundar, the heart of Sri Jiva began to pine for beholding Sri Goursundar. Having seen Mahaprabhu in a dream, Sri Jiva came from Bakla-Chandradwip to Sri Nabadwip via Fateyābād. He circumambulated *Sridham* Nabadwip following Lord Nityananda.

After this Sri Jiva studied many scriptures in Benaras under the guidance of Sri Madhusudan Bachaspati, the disciple of Sri Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya. From Benaras he came to Vrindavan and studied Srimad Bhagabatam and other devotional scriptures at the lotus-feet of Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan. Sri Jiva began to stay in Vraja and bacame fully absorbed in the Adoration of Sri Krishna.

Sri Sanatan was much pleased to see Sri Jiva's mastery over the Principles of Devotion. He entrusted Sri Jiva with the task of correcting his own commentary *Brihad Vaishnava-toshani*. Sri Rupa Goswami kindly offered the service of the Deity of Srī Rādhā-Dāmodar to Sri Jiva. After the disappearance of the most venerable Preceptors like Sri Rupa Goswami and Sri Sanatan Goswami, Sri Jiva Goswami was installed as the Sovereign Preceptor-Leader of the Association of Gaudīya Vaishnavas (the followers of the teachings of Lord Chaitanya are known as Gaudīya Vaishnavas) in Bengal, Vrindaban and Puri.

Sri Jiva Goswami was a prolific writer in the field of Vaishnava philosophy. He composed innumerable books of transcendental wisdom. Famous among them are — *Sri Harināmāmṛita-byākaran*, *Srī Gopāl-birudābālī*, *Srī Bhaktirasāmṛitashes*, *Srī Mādhavmohatsab*, *Srī Sankalpakalpadrum*, *Commentary of Sri Bramhasamhita (Fifth Chapter)*, *Sri Durgam-sangamanī* (*Commentary of Srī Bhaktirasāmṛitasindhu.*), *Srī Lochanrochanī* (*Commentary of Sri Ujjwalnilmani*), *Srī Gopalchampū*, *Srī Tattwa-sandarbha*, *Srī Bhāgabat-sandarbha*, *Srī Paramātmā-sandarbha*, *Srī Krishna-sandarbha*, *Srī Bhakti-sandarbha*, *Srī Prīti-sandarbha*, (these Six Sandarbhas are Sri Jiva's immortal and most-famous works), *Srī Rādhā-Krishna-archan-dīpikā*, *Dhātū-sangraha*, *Sutra-Mālikā*, *Bhābārtha-sūchak-champū*, *Krama-sandarbha* (the *Commentary of the whole Bhāgabatam*), *Srī Sukhabodhinī* (the *Commentary of Sri Gopālītāpanī*) etc.

SRĪ RAGHUNĀTH DĀS GOSWĀMĪ

In the 'Krishnapur' village of 'Saptagram' in the district of Hooghly, there lived an aristocratic and wealthy landlord named Sri Gobardhan Das holding the title of 'Majumdār'. Srila Raghunath Das appeared as the son of Sri Gobardhan Das. Sri Balaram Acharya was the family-priest of Sri Gobardhan Das. He was fortunate enough to receive the merciful blessings of Srīla Haridās Thākur, an intimate associate of Lord Goursundar and famous as 'Nāmāchārya' or the Divine Teacher of the Adoration of the Holy Name. During the stay of Sri Haridas Thakur in the House of Sri Balaram Acharya, the tender-aged Raghunath would regularly come there for study under the guidance of Sri Balarām and there he had the rare fortune of gaining the sacred company and boundless mercy of Thakur Haridas.

Sri Jadunandan Acharya, the Preceptor-priest of Sri Gobardhan Das, was an intimate disciple of Srila Adwaitāchārya. Srila Raghunath Das was initiated by Sri Jadunandan Acharya. In his prime youth, Raghunath gave up vast property and exquisitely beautiful wife. With the blessings of Lord Nityananda he rushed to Puri and surrendered himself to the lotus-feet of Lord Gouranga Who in turn offered him to Swarūp Dāmodar, the Second Self of Sri Goursundar. Swarūp Dāmodar brought him up with great care and love. He came to be known as "Swarūper Raghu" (i.e. the Raghunāth of Swarūp Dāmodar.)

Raghunath attained the rarest fortune of the intimate loving service of Lord Goursundar. The Lord was kind

enough to offer him the love-service of Krishna in the Form of "*Gobardhan-Shilā*" (the Sacred Stone of the Gobardhan-Hill) and Radharani in the Form of "*Gunjāmālā*" (the Holy String of black-spotted red beads). After the sudden disappearance of Lord Goursundar, Sri Raghunath became mad in agony of separation and rushed to Vrindavan with the intention of sacrificing his life by jumping down from the Gobardhan Hill. Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan consoled him and bathed him in the nectar of their affection.

Sri Raghunath completely dedicated himself for the most confidential loving service of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda in Sṛī Rādhākunda (The Divine Lake of Sri Radha). All the devotees marvelled at his unparalleled, transcendental renunciation born of pangs of separation. Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami has thus described the daily life of Srila Raghunath in Sri Vrindavan :

"Raghunath gave up food and water. He would drink only a little sour whey. He would fall prostrate on the ground a thousand times and chant one lakh Names daily. He would daily offer obeisances to two thousand Vaishnavas. He would serve Sri Sri Radha-Krishna mentally day and night. He would speak of the glories of Lord Gouranga for a period of three hours daily. He would bathe in the holy Radhakunda three times a day. He would daily embrace the pure Vaishnavas dwelling in Vraja. Srila Raghunath used to spend about twenty two hours and thirty minutes daily in devotional practices. He would sleep for just ninety minutes and sometimes, absorbed in the passion of chanting the Name, he would deny himself even that short sleep."

Among the precious books penned by Srila Raghunath Das Goswami Prabhu, mention should be made of *Srī Stabābālī*, *Srī Dāncharit* and *Srī Mukṭācharit*.

SRĪ KRISHNADĀS KAVIRĀJ

Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj, the immortal author of *Srī Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*, appeared at Jhamatpur, a village in the district of Burdwan. Little is known about his early life.

Oneday, Sri Minketan Ramdas, a great servitor of Lord Nityananda, paid a kind visit to the house of Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj. He sang and danced in ecstatic love and made everyone happy. But he had an altercation with Krishnadas's younger brother, who regarded himself as a devotee of Lord Gouranga, but had little faith in Lord Nityananda. Sri Ramdas became very sad at this. He said, "Lord Goursundar and Lord Nityananda are One and the Same Supreme Reality. They are Two Eternal Brothers—identical with Each Other. If you respect one and disregard the other, you will be ruined." So saying, Sri Ramdas left their house in wrath and Krishnadas severely rebuked his brother for committing a serious offence at the feet of Sri Ramdas. That night as he lay asleep, Lord Nityananda appeared to him in a dream and bade him give up the world and retire to Vrindavan where the supreme good is eternally available. Next morning, Krishnadas left home and kindred and came on foot to Vrindavan where he spent the rest of his life.

Sri Krishnadas accepted the Six Goswamins of Sri Vrindavan as his *Sikshā-Guru* or Divine Teachers. At the

end of each chapter of *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*; he has described himself as a very humble follower of Sri Rupa Goswami and Sri Raghunath Das Goswami. From his Guru, Sri Raghunath, Krishnadas learnt the particulars of Sri Chaitanya's life and teachings which he has embodied in his celebrated book.

The Vaishnavas of Vrindavan requested Sri Krishnadas Kaviraj to write a new and fuller life of Mahaprabhu, as the famous book of Sri Vrindavan Das Thakur, *Srī Chaitanya Bhāgabat*, did not contain a detailed description of the last part of the Lord's life. The old poet came to the temple of Sri Madanmohan, absorbed in deep thought. While he was praying for the Divine approbation, a garland slipped down from the Deity's neck and receiving this sign of approval the poet became glad and immediately started writing his magnum opus "*Srī Chaitanya-charitāmrita*".

The aged poet completed his immortal masterpiece after years of unremitting labour of love. This world-famous classic is not only a poetical biography par excellence, but also a transcendental store-house of the esoteric truths of Vaishnava philosophy. The readers of this sublime book cannot but marvel at the writer's incredible scholarship in all branches of learning, his unique talent for subtle philosophical analysis, his unparalleled poetic skill and his supra-mundane scriptural knowledge. Above all, what moves even stony hearts to tears is the extra-ordinary humility of the poet : "I am a more notorious sinner than Jagāi and Mādhāi. I am a more abominable creature than the worm of stool".

Besides *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, he is famous for his book entitled *Srī Govinda-leelāmṛita* and the *Sārangaragadā* Commentary of *Srī Krishna-Karnāmṛita*. Srila Narottam Thakur described him as the 'Centre' of the great, loving devotees of Vrindavan. Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur has observed—"Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami was the Gurudeva of the Circle of intimate devotees".

SRĪ NAROTTAM THĀKUR

Sri Narottam, the son of King Srīkrishnānanda, was born in Kheturi. In his boyhood he heard about the glories of Sri Gour and Sri Nitai and began to chant Their sweet names day and night. Oneday Lord Goursundar revealed Himself to Narottam in a dream. Narottam decided to leave home and go to Vrindavan. His parents kept some guards to prevent him from renouncing the world. But a chance came when his father had to go to the court of the King of Bengal. Leaving home Narottam ran towards Vrindavan. He felt neither hunger, nor thirst on the way. He wept bitterly and sang songs of prayer and rushed towards his destination.

In Vrindavan, Srila Jiva Goswami was kind enough to advise him to serve the lotus-feet of Sri Lokanath Goswami. Sri Narottam began to cleanse the latrine of Sri Lokanath secretly at night. After one year, Sri Lokanath discovered the mystery and with great affection gave him initiation.

Narottam used to study devotional scriptures under the guidance of Srī Jīva Goswami. Srīnibas Acharya and

Srī Shyāmānanda Prabhu also entered themselves as students of Sri Jiva. These three students of Sri Jiva became bosom friends. Their Teacher asked them to carry the treasure of Divine Books written by the Goswamins to Bengal and preach the gospels of Lord Goursundar among all. On their way to Bengal, they came to Banavishnupur, where the king Vīr Hāmbīr stole that treasure of books. Srinibas stayed there to recover the stolen books from the royal palace. Sri Norottam started for Kheturi.

Soon he came to Nabadwip, extremely eager to behold the Birth-site of Mahaprabhu. With tears streaming down his eyes, he prostrated himself at the gate of the House of Sri Jagannath Mishra. Entering the house, he met first Srī Shuklāmbārī Brahmachārī and then Srī Tīshān Thākūr and paid obeisances to them. Then Narottam visited the House of Lord Nityananda in Khardaha and recieved the direct blessings of Srīmatī Basudhā Devī and Srīmatī Jānhavā Devī, the Eternal Consorts of Lord Nityananda. Narottam then came to *Sridhām* Puri and received the blessings of the devotees of Sri Goursundar living there.

After visiting many other places in Orissa and Bengal, he came to behold the Birth-site of Lord Nityananda at Ekchākā. At last Narottam reached Kheturi where he received a warm welcome from all. King Sri Santosh Datta took initiation from Sri Narottam and built a huge temple with the permission of Sri Narottam. Six Deities named Srī Gourānga, Srī Ballabīkānta, Srī Krishna, Srī Brajamohan, Srī Rādhāraman and Srī Rādhākānta were installed on the auspicious day of Sri Goursundar's Advent

on earth. The king arranged for a grand festival on this occasion. The Holy Mother Srimati Janhava Devi graced the occasion by her august presence. Srinibas, Sri Narottam and Sri Shyamananda met together. Vaishnavas from distant places poured in. The village of kheturi turned into a Great Place of Pilgrimage. The air was filled with the loud sound of the Congregational Chanting of the Names of Hari. Thousands of devotees sang, danced, cried and rolled on the ground in an ecstatic frenzy of divine love. When Srila Narottam Thakur began to sing aloud as the leader of Sankirtan, Lord Goursundar along with His Associates miraculously appeared there, sang and danced and fulfilled the desires of Thakur Narottam. On the next day, thousands of devotees, distinguished guests and other people were fed various types of *Māhāprasād*. After this Grand Festival of Kheturi, the fame of Sri Narottam Thakur spread far and wide. Many learned Brahmins took initiation from him. King Narasingha and the renowned scholar named Sri Rupanarayan came to argue with him, but were ultimately converted into his disciples. Day after day Sri Narottam rescued many sinners and blasphemers. At last he disappeared from this world in a miraculous way. Narottam sat in the water of the Ganges. The devotees all around were singing aloud the Names of Hari. Narottam asked his disciples, Sri Ramkrishna Acharya and Sri Ganganarayan Chakraborty, to rub his body. As soon as they touched him, his divine body melted into the water of the Ganges and disappeared from this world.

Thakur Srila Narottam wrote innumerable songs of prayer, humility, divine love and separation. He also composed songs glorifying Sri Guru and Vaishnavas and the Holy Name. His songs of *Srī Premabhakti-Chandrikā* and *Prārthanā* move every reader to tears.

SRĪ BISHWANĀTH CHAKRABARTĪ THĀKUR

There is a famous and oft-quoted verse about Srila Bishwanath Chakrabarti Thakur—

*“Bishwasya Nātharūpo'sou bhaktibartma-pradarshanāt,
Bhaktachakre bartitatwāt Chakrabartyā-khyayābhabat.”*

(As he showed the entire world the path of pure devotion, he is called ‘Bishwanath’. As he always stayed in the circle of pure devotees, he is famous as ‘Chakrabarti’.)

Srila Biswanath was born in a Brahmin family in Debagram in the district of Nadia. He was a talented student right from his boyhood. While in Nadia, he thoroughly studied Sanskrit grammar, poetry, rhetoric etc. During his student-life he defeated a learned man of world-wide fame. From his very childhood, he was indifferent to this world. His father arranged for his early marriage in order to keep him confined to the house. After spending some time as a householder Sri Bishwanath renounced the world and became an inhabitant of Vrindavan.

Going to Vrindavan, he began to live near the *bhajan*-cottage of Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami on the bank of the holy Radhakunda. All the famous Goswamins of Vrindavan had disappeared before he came to Vrindavan.

The pure devotees living in Vrindavan were very glad to have Śrīla Bishwanath among them. Many sincere learners like Śrīla Baladev Vidyābhūsan Prabhu entered themselves as his students and studied devotional scriptures under his able guidance.

Śrila Bishwanath installed the Deity of Gokulananda in Sri Radhakunda and revealed His love-service for 'Eight Jāms' or twenty-four hours.

Śrila Bishwanath Thakur preserved the Gaudiya Vaishnava Religion with the help of many learned books that he wrote with meticulous care and devotion. These books reveal the fact that he was a transcendental philosopher, poet, scholar, connoisseur of the Bliss of Divine Love and loving Preceptor. As a Preceptor, he would remain absorbed in his own meditation and adoration of the Lord and at the same time he would love the sweet company of the Circle of pure devotees. His famous books include *Śrī Brajaṛīti-Chintāmani*, *Śrī Chamatkārchandrikā*, *Śrī Premasamput*, *Śrī Stabāmritalaharī*, *Śrī Premabhaktichandrikā*, *Śrī Madhurya-Kādambini*, *Śrī Bhaktirasamrita-sindhu-bindhu*, *Śrī Bhāgabatāmrita-kanā* etc.

ŚRĪ BALADEV VIDYĀBHŪSAN

Sri Baladev Vidyabhusan Prabhu is famous as the "Vedānta-Āchārya" of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. He has nowhere mentioned anything about his birthplace, parents or family. Some say that Śrī Baladev was born in some place of Orissa. However, he gained mastery over Sanskrit grammar, poetry, rhetoric and logic at a very young age.

Then he studied the Vedas with great care and became a world-famous scholar within a short time. He visited many places of pilgrimage.

Sri Baladev studied devotional scriptures under Sri Pitambar Das, a great ascetic devotee. Then he became the disciple of Srila Radhadamodar Dev, a renowned Vaishnava scholar and the grand-disciple of Srila Rasikananda Dev. Sri Baladev studied the famous Six Sandarvas written by Srila Jiva Goswami under the guidance of Srila Radhadamodar Dev and became an adept in the Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy. With the permission of his Guru, he visited Navadwip and with a view to learning more about Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy, he came to Srila Bishwanath Chakrabarti in Sri Vrindavan.

Sri Bishwanath Chakrabarti was very pleased to see Sri Baladev's humility, renunciation and devotion to scriptural study. With great affection he taught Baladev Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Principles of "**Achintya-bhedā-bheda**" (The doctrine of inconceivable simultaneous distinction and non-distinction, i.e., all beings are simultaneously existent in, and distinct and non-distinct from, the All-Pervading Supreme Lord Sri Krishna). Sri Baladev adored the Transcendental Principles of Gaudiya Vaishnava Philosophy with great sincerity and dedication and began to preach the same with great enthusiasm.

Once some Vaishnavas belonging to the School of Sri Rāmānuja came to the King of Jaipur and commented that there was no Vedanta-commentary in the Gaudiya Vaishnava Community. They requested the king to worship

first Lord Nārāyana before worshipping Lord Kirshna. The Vaishnava King informed Sri Bishwanath Chakrabarti of the whole matter. At that time Sri Bishwanath was too old to go to Jaipur. So from Vrindavan he sent his worthy student, Sri Baladev Vidyabhusan, to the court of Jaipur. There Sri Baladev had a great fight of arguments with reputed scholars belonging to *Srī Samprādāy*, who were ultimately defeated. Sri Baladev pronounced the truth that the Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Himself was the introducer of the Gaudīya Sampradāy and that Mahaprabhu accepted *Srimad Bhagabatam* as the pure Vedanta-Commentary. We get a proof of this truth from Sri Jiva's "Sat-Sandarbha". The scholars of Sri Ramanuja School were reluctant to accept this. They wanted to see the direct Vedanta-Commentary itself. Sri Baladev promised to show them that Commentary after a few days. With a heavy heart he came to the temple of Lord Govinda and prayed to Him with profuse tears. At night he received direct inspiration and order from the Lord in a dream and wrote his celebrated commentary known as "*Srī Govinda-Bhāṣya*". After a few days he showed the scholars his newly written Commentary and they became totally silent. The king and the Gaudiya devotees were overjoyed at this triumph of the Gaudiya Sampradāy. Sri Baladev was conferred the title "*Vidyābhūsan*". Srila Bishwanath Chakrabarti was extremely happy and heartily blessed his disciple. After the disappearance of Sri Bishwanath, Sri Baladev appeared as the Spiritual Head or President of the Association of Gaudiya Vaishnava devotees. Among his innumerable books, mention should be made of Sri

Govinda Bhāṣya, Srī Siddhānta Ratna, Sāhitya Koumudī, Vedānta Syamāntak, Prameya Ratnāvalī, Siddhanta Darpan, Kābya Koustubh, Pada Koustubh etc.

SRĪ UDDHA DĀS PRABHU

Sri Uddhab Das Prabhu was a faithful disciple of Sripad Baladev Bidyabhusan Prabhu, the famous Gaudiya Vedanta-Acharya. After the disappearance of Srila Bishwanath Chakrabarti and Srila Baladev Bidyabhusan, a dark age started in the Gaudiya Vaishnava world. Then Sri Uddhab Das, Sri Madhusudan Das, (disciple of Sri Uddhab Das) and Sri Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj (disciple of Sri Madhusudan Das) preserved the religion of unalloyed devotion. Sri Uddhab Das was “Bibiktānandī Paramahansa” (i.e. Greatly detached Devotee of the Highest Stage who likes to remain absorbed in solitary meditation or adoration of God). Sri Uddhab Das Prabhu wrote a valuable book entitled ‘*Upāsana Paddhati*’.

SRĪ MADHUSUDAN DĀS BĀBĀJĪ MAHĀRAJ

Sri Madhusudan Das Babaji Maharaj was a greatly detached devotee of the topmost category. At the same time, he revealed his *leela* of Preacher-cum-Preceptor. He was a disciple of Sri Uddhab Das. He used to live in Sri Sūrya Kunda. Srimati Radharani would come to Surya Kunda five miles away from Sri Radha Kunda and would meet Krishna and serve Him on the pretext of worshipping the Sun-god. She would keep her crown on a slab of red stone on the bank of Surya Kunda and bathe in the pool.

Receiving Srimati Radharani's order in a dream, Srila Madhusudan Das Babaji picked up that heavy red stone from the pool holding it like a light garland in his bosom. The print of crown on that stone can be seen even today. Srila Babaji Maharaj would worship that holy stone according to the command of Srimati Radharani.

When Srila Babaji read and interpreted *Srimad Bhagabatam* in his cottage, a python would regularly come and listen to his discourse. Srila Madhusudan Das Babaji Maharaj was famous as a "*Siddha Māhatmā*" (Great devotee who has attained perfection or final success) in Surya Kunda. Listening to his discourse on *Srimad Bhagabatam*, many crooked-minded men gave up their mischievous nature and became purified and attracted towards the gospels of *Srimad Bhagabatam*.

SRĪA JAGANNĀTH DĀS BĀBĀJĪ MAHĀRAJ

Srila Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj was the sovereign emperor of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world. No human talent can ever describe his fathomless love for Lord Goursundar. He spent many years in the adoration of Sri Radha-Govinda in Sri Vrindavan. He was a highly revered personality. Everywhere he was renowned as "*Siddha Bābā*" (a great devotee who has reached the Goal or attained Ultimate Success). Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur beheld his lotus-feet for the first time in Vrindavan in 1880 and received many precious pieces of advice about *Haribhajan* from him. Srila Babaji Maharaj said—"There is the danger of committing Ten Offences while chanting

Hare Krishna *Mahāmantra*. But there is no consideration of offence in uttering *Pancha Tattwa* —

“Sṛī Krishna-Chaitanya Prabhu Nityānanda,

Sṛī Adwaita Gadādhara Sṛīvāsādi Gour-bhaktabrinda.”

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur met Srila Babaji Maharaj for the second time at Amlajora village in the district of Burdwan in the month of Falgun 1298 *Bangābda* (Year of the Bengali era). Srila Babaji Maharaj observed the holy fast enjoined on the eleventh day of a lunar fortnight (*Ekādashī*) at Amlajora village and discoursed on God day and night. Though he was very old, he was fond of devotional dance and congregational singing of the Holy Name. Next day Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur established ‘Sṛī Prapannāshram’ at Amlajora village. Srila Babaji Maharaj was very happy to see the ceaseless loving efforts of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur in preaching and propagating the gospels of Lord Gouranga.

While staying in Navadwip, Srila Babaji Maharaj would remain absorbed in his *Nām-Bhajan* (the adoration of the Holy Name) on the bank of the Ganges at Kuliya. (His *Bhajan*-cottage and his *Samadhi*-temple are still existing in this place.) Srila Babaji Maharaj asked Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur to construct a shed in front of his cottage for the devotees. Srila Thakur gladly carried out his order.

In 1893 Srila Babaji Maharaj came from Kuliya, Navadwip to Sri Godrum Suravi Kunja and made Thakur Bhaktivinoda and other devotees extremely happy. Srila Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj paid a kind visit to Sri

Mayapur. It was with the divine inspiration of Srila Babaji Maharaj that Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode discovered the Birth-site of Mahaprabhu. Srila Babaji Maharaj ascertained that the discovery was true. He pronounced it to the entire world and danced in ecstatic joy in the holy Birth-place of the Lord. Devotees marvelled at his wild dance at such a ripe old age. Dancing impetuously with loud roars, he swept the devotees away on the wave of transcendental enthusiasm. The sound of Sankirtan filled the three worlds and maddened the Vaishnavas present there.

Srila Babaji Maharaj had a great affection for Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur whom he asked to prepare a Vaishnava Almanac. From Srila Babaji Maharaj, the world has learnt that the fifth day of the bright fortnight in the month of *Māgha* is the day of Sri Vishnupriya Devi's appearance.

Srila Babaji Maharaj disappeared from this world in Navadwip in 1895 at the age of about 147. Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur described him as "the Old Commander of the army of devotees".

Some of his immortal messages to this world are like this—"Those who make money by interpreting the Bhagabatam are offenders at the feet of the Holy Name. The transcendental words of Krishna never appear on their lips. Their attitude is more abominable than that of prostitutes. Those who listen to the talks of such speakers will be ruined."

"If you want final success in your *Bhajan*, you must maintain strict regularity in chanting the Name. Don't go to

bed before completing the fixed number of chanting everyday. Stick to your vow even at the cost of your life. If you adore the Holy Name with such sincerity, you are sure to attain perfection or final success. At first you will have to toil hard. But ultimately you will get eternal rest at the blissful feet of Lord Gouranga."

SRĪLA BHĀGABAT DĀS BĀBAJĪ MAHĀRAJ

Srila Bhagabat Das Babaji Maharaj was the disciple of Srila Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj, as he adopted the Babaji-dress from Srila Jagannath. Srila Bhagabat Prabhu was the '*Besh-Guru*' of Srila Gourkishore Das Babaji Maharaj. In other words, Srila Gourkishore was initiated with *Bābāji*-dress ('*Besh*') by Srila Bhagabat Das Babaji Maharaj. Srila Bhagabat Das Babaji would remain absorbed in meditative adoration of the Holy Name in *Sridham* Vrindavan. He used to like to remain absolutely concealed. So little is learnt about his divine life. He disappeared from the world in the holy Vrindavan Dham and his sacred '*Samādhī*' still exists on the bank of Sri Surya Kunda.

SRĪLA BHAKTIVINODE THĀKUR

Om Vishnupād 108 Srī Srīla Sachchidānanda Bhaktivinode Thākura, an eternal associate of the Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya, descended on earth in the first half of the 19th century (in 1838) with the divine mission of reviving the Universal Religion of Unalloyed Devotion and Divine Love in the modern world. Prior to his advent, the condition

of the spiritual world became veritably deplorable. The firmament of pure Vaishnava Religion was covered with clouds of fake religions. Pseudo-devotees distorted the most sacred Teachings of Sri Chaitanya and busied themselves with the tasks of cheating others and gratifying their own senses. In order to disperse these clouds of non-devotional elements and dispel the encircling gloom, Thakur Bhaktivinode appeared as the Divine Sun in accordance with the transcendental will of the Supreme Lord. He came of the illustrious Datta family of Hatkhola. He was highly educated and held the rank of Deputy Magistrate. He pioneered the Chaitanya-movement and reinstated its pristine glory to its fullest. He gave a momentous impetus to the preaching and teaching of the Divine Truths treasured in *Srimad Bhagabatam*. Mr. Sisir Kr. Ghose rightly called him 'The Seventh Goswāmī', whose contribution was as great as that of the Six Goswāmins of Vrindavan.

He wrote more than hundred books on pure devotion in various languages like English, Sanskrit, Bengali and Urdu and also penned innumerable articles for publication in various leading newspapers and journals of that period. His outstanding books include *Jaiba Dharma*, *Srī krishna Samhitā*, *Srī Srī Mahāprabhur Sikshā*, *Srī Bhāgabātarka-marichimālā*, *Tattwasūtra*, *Āmnāya Sūtra*, *Srī Chaitanya Sikshāmritā*, *Srī Harinām Chintāmani*, *Bhajan Rahasya*, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprābhu : His Life and Precepts*, *The Bhāgabāt*, *Dattakoustubha*, *Tattwa-bibek* etc. He also composed innumerable devotional poems and songs which were published under the titles of *Kalyāṅkalpataru*, *Saranāgati*, *Gītābālī* and *Gītāmālā*.

With a heart that overflowed with infinite kindness for suffering humanity, he wrote these books for the eternal, tangible, supreme good of human beings. In his books he tried to convey what according to Sri Chaitanya is the real meaning of the eternal religion that has come down to us in the records of the Scriptures through the chain of Preceptors. He possessed a profound knowledge of all scriptures and had a special command of the teachings of the Goswamins which he incorporated in a very simple and lucid style in his books. The central topic of Thakur Bhaktivinode's teaching is the absolute necessity of worship by the method of taking the Holy Name in the present age. His special contribution is his detailed treatment of every variety of offence that has to be carefully avoided if the Name has to be taken in the proper manner. His *Sri Hari-Nama-Chintamani* is a unique book on this subject. Through the journal '*Sri Sajjan-toshani*' he preached the glory of transcendental classics like *Srimad Bhagabatam* and *Sri Chaitanya Charitāmrita*. Through his books like '*Srī Nabadwip-dhām-māhātmya*', he preached the divine glory of the Holy Dham of Lord Goursundar.

He revived *Srī Viswa Vaishnava Rājsabhā* founded by Srila Jiva Goswami in the 16th Century. It was Thakur Bhaktivinode who discovered the real Birthsite of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in *Sridham Mayapur*, Nadia, West Bengal. He is, by common consent, regarded as the fountain-head of Gaudiya Mission and the greatest pioneer of *Bhagavata Dharma* in the modern world. Prof. N. K.Sanyal has beautifully remarked in his celebrated

book *Sree Krishna Chaitanya*— "It was the life-work of Thakur Bhaktivinode to re-discover the true history of Sree Chaitanya and make the same available to the present generation. The magnitude of this service to his country, to humanity and to all animate beings, time alone will show. The eternal religion taught and practised by Sree Chaitanya have been made intelligible to the modern reader by the labours of Thakur Bhaktivinodē. It is bound to re-act most powerfully on all existing religious convictions of the world and make possible the establishment of universal spiritual harmony of which the whole world stands so much in need."

Thakur Bhaktivinode was specially empowered by the Lord to conduct *Nāma-Sankīrtan*. In his life-time Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur has flooded the world with pure *Hari-Sankīrtan* or the Congregational Chanting of Hari (The Supreme Lord). Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur has sung the songs of Krishna, preached the glory of Krishna through books and journals and installed Krishna in the temple of the hearts of many. He has revealed the ontology of Krishna comprising three cardinal points viz. (1) *Sambandha* or Relation with God, (2) *Abhidheya* or Means to reach Him, and (3) *Prayojana* or Love for the Lord which is the summum bonum or Supreme Need of life. As Lord Goursundar, the Father of *Nama-Sankīrtan*, conducted Congregational Chanting in Nabadwip, Vrindaban, Nilachal and other parts of India, so endowed with His strength, Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode held Sankīrtan in order to take many people back to the Abode of Eternal Bliss.

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur conducted such powerful Sankirtan as purified the hearts of many. The desecrated hearts were consecrated and cleansed. Inclination to sinning and worldly hankering disappeared. By listening to the touching discourse of Thakur Bhaktivinode, many minds turned towards Krishna and many hearts were elated with divine joy. Many persons developed a passionate heart for Krishna and those already advanced in the line of devotion reached the very perfection of Transcendental Love. Such was the power of real Krishna-Sankirtan, held by Thakur Bhaktivinode. The lives of many people were led devotionally by the influence of this powerful Sankirtan. Ultimately they had been blessed with the vision of their most beloved Lord. Thakur Bhaktivinode did full justice to his name by pleasing (*vinode*) the Goddess of devotion (*Bhakti*).

Thakur Bhaktivinode disappeared from the world in 1914 and left behind him his most precious contribution to this world—Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur whom he trained and empowered to preserve and invigorate the Line of Unalloyed Devotion. Thus Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode entrusted the guidance of the movement of pure devotion to his successor who, on a bigger scale in India and abroad, continued the work to revive in the minds of sincere souls the eternal spirit of pure love and true devotion to the Absolute Godhead Sri Gour-Krishna.

Srīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākura has aptly remarked, "That this Bhaktivinode-line will eternally run non-stop is the declaration of the holy Vedas. Why

so? Because this line has appeared at the divine will of the Lord Himself and He is fulfilling His mission through this channel. This current will never come to a standstill."

**SRĪLA GOURKRISHORE DĀS
BĀBĀJĪ MAHĀRĀJ**

Srila Gourkrishore Das Babaji Maharaj was the most beloved Preceptor of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. After renouncing the world he came to Vrindavan and took the "*Bābājī* dress" from Srila Bhagābat Das Babaji Maharaj, a prominent disciple of Srila Jagannnath Das Babaji Maharaj. He spent about thirty years in various villages of Vraja-mandal. While staying in Varshānā, he made Sri Radharani very happy by stringing garlands regularly. He came to Navadwip in 1894 in accordance with the order of Srila Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj and spent the rest of his life in various places of Navadwip. From 1906 he gave up the life of a wanderer and agreed to live in a cottage. Before that he would roam about from one village to another in *Sridham* Navadwip and move from door to door, singing the sweet names of Gadāi-Gourāṅga and Rādhā-Govinda. He would never allow anyone to serve him in any way.

The severe austerities revealed in his character would remind everyone of those of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami Prabhu, the eternal intimate associate of Lord Goursundar. Their renunciation was not something negative. It was transcendental, eternal and absolutely positive. It was the acme of eagerness to gratify the

divine senses of Krishna in all sorts of ways. The sublime ideal of his positive austerity could melt even stony hearts. He was fully detached from worldly things, as he was fully attached to the Supreme Lord. Srila Acharyadeva described Srila Babaji Maharaj as "Hard shell without, but mellow juice within."

He was a great '*Abadhūt*' (an independent devotee beyond scriptural regulations). Mysterious were his manners. Sometimes he could be seen in a proper Vaishnava dress with Sri Narottam Thakur's *Prārthanā* and *Premabhakti-chandrikā* in his hands and chanting on Tulasi beads. Sometimes he was seen without any Tulasi neck-beads, wearing almost nothing, speaking harshly, and expressing causeless disgust. He would collect the rejected clay pots of the householders of Nabadwip and use them for cooking for the Lord after washing them in the water of the Ganges. He made his loin-cloth from the dispelled clothes of the dead bodies at the crematorium after washing them in Ganga-water.

While Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur was staying at Godrum Swānanda-Sukhada-Kunja, Srila Babaji Maharaj would come to him very often. He used to listen to the discourses on *Srimad Bhagabatam* from the lips of Thakur Bhaktivinode. Sometimes he used to spend the night there in a small room. Srila Babaji Maharaj was always very enthusiastic about discussing the principles of unalloyed devotion with Thakur Bhaktivinode.

Srila Saraswati Thakur has written—"Srimad Bhaktivinode Thakur was merciful enough to show me my Divine Master, Srila Babaji Maharaj".

(Sri Sajjantoshanī 19/5/6). When he met his Preceptor for the first time, Srila Babaji Maharaj was singing a melancholy song of Divine Love-in-separation—*"Kothāy go premamayi Rādhe, Rādhe !"* (O Radharani ! O My Goddess full of Love ! Where are you now ?) Srila Saraswati Thakur prayed to him for initiation. Srila Gourkishore Prabhu examined Srila Saraswati Thakur three times and being pleased to see his determination, bathed him with the dust of his lotus-feet. He was initiated and the wish of Thakur Bhaktivinode was fulfilled.

SRĪLA BHAKTI SIDDHĀNTA SARASWATĪ GOSWAMĪ THĀKUR

About 513 years ago, the Supreme Lord Goursundar appeared on earth at the call of Srila Adwaita Acharya and disseminated Divine Love through *Nama-Sankirtan*. After some time the spread of Lord Goursundar's ideas suffered a set-back due to the influence of the age. This sight pained the devotees of the lotus-feet of Lord Goursundar and they cherished the desire that the flow of Goursundar's mercy should never be stopped. About 400 years after the appearance of Lord Chaitanya, a person of Golok (the Absolute Realm) came down to earth at the will of the Lord and His Associates in order to reawaken that latent force. This person appeared among the human beings and assumed their appearance and revealed his *leela* as His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur.

In 1874 this eternal associate of the Supreme Lord, Sri Chaitanya, descended in the holy place *Nārāyanchhātā* just near the Temple of Sri Jagannath Deva, Puri, as an accredited Vaishnava son of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur, the pioneer in preaching and propagating Sri Chaitanya's Bhakti Cult in modern times. Six months after his appearance, the Car Festival took place. The Car of Lord Jagannath stood still for three days before Thakur Bhaktivinode's house. One day his mother took him to Lord Jagannath and lo ! a garland slipped down from the Lord's neck as a blessing on the baby. From his very childhood, he was taught to chant the Holy Name of Sri Hari by his great Vaishnava Father of revered memory. In his early young age, he showed his versatile genius in Vaishnava Philosophy and travelled far and wide, visiting many sacred places of India to acquaint himself with different philosophical schools. During this period he was initiated in *Mantras* by the well-known Sri Gourkishore Das Babaji Maharaj of Sri Navadvip Dham. Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur ordered Srila Saraswati Thakur to take initiation from Srila Gourkishore Das Babaji Maharaj. Srila Saraswati Thakur was a strict celibate, great savant and staunch moralist. But when he first asked for initiation, Srila Babaji Maharaj answered, "Without asking Mahaprabhu, I cannot say anything." Next day Srila Saraswati Thakur again approached him, and Babaji Maharaj replied, "I forgot to ask Mahaprabhu". On the third day Srila Babaji Maharaj answered, "I asked Mahaprabhu, but He said—Good moral character or scholarship is very

insignificant in comparison to devotion". Srila Saraswati Thakur replied : "You are serving the greatest of deceivers, Lord Krishna. So you are trying to deceive me. Śrī Rāmānujācārya, after being rejected 18 times, was able to get initiation. I do promise, in the same way I will get your mercy one day or other."

Srila Babaji Maharaj was very pleased with his determination and that very day Srila Saraswati Thakur was initiated at Swananda-Sukhada-Kunja. Srila Saraswati Thakur completed his sacred vow of chanting one hundred crore Names in the holy land of Mayapur with unprecedented devotion, dedication and meditation. He was blessed with a transcendental vision of the Supreme Lord Śrī Goursundar, surrounded by His Eternal Associates Who showered Their affectionate blessings on him and ordered him to preach the Principles of Pure Devotion.

He took Sannyas at the age of 44 in the year 1918 to propagate the Divine Gospel of Lord Śrī Chaitanya all over the world. He is the founder of Śrī Chaitanya Math at Sirdham Mayapur and Śrī Gaudiya Math in Calcutta and is the pioneer in establishing preaching centres in the name of Gaudiya Math throughout India and abroad under the Gaudiya Mission. He spared no pains to preach the blissful gospels of Divine Love as propagated by the Supreme Lord Śrī Chaitanya. He established 64 Gaudiya Maths in India and abroad. The Headquarters were situated at Baghbazar, Calcutta, where a wealthy devotee of Barisal, Mr. Jagabandhu Dutta, built a large temple of marble-stone and dedicated

the temple as well as himself to his Divine Master, Srila Saraswati Thakur. Srila Saraswati Thakur ushered in a true renaissance of unalloyed devotion in the whole world. He was a versatile scholar—a veritable living encyclopedia. A prolific writer, he wrote many authoritative books on Vaishnava Philosophy. He published monthly, weekly, even daily devotional journals, edited and annotated rare books of devotion, organised exhibitions and seminars, held big meetings attended by scholars and elites, spent gallons of divine blood in devotional discourses and sent well-trained preachers to all quarters of India and abroad. His charismatic personality, extra-ordinary character and incredible scholarship drew many worthy souls to him who dedicated themselves to his lotus-feet. The aristocratic, learned and wealthy section of the society specially received his causeless mercy. Srila Saraswati Thakur revived the dormant, loving relationship of everyone with the Supreme Lord Krishna. He reinstated the people of the world in the eternal service of the Supreme Lord. In a word, he fulfilled the divine desire of Lord Gouranga and His eternal intimates before disappearing in 1937. Srīla Anantavāsudeva Paravidyābhusan Prabhu (Sṛīmad Bhakti Prasād Puṛī Goswāmī Thākur) assisted him in all sorts of ways in fulfilling his transcendental mission.

Srila Saraswati Thakur sacrificed his entire life for the eternal good of the suffering humanity. He would discourse upon Sri Hari for hours together. When asked to take rest, he would answer, "To talk about Krishna is

my rest." He would shatter into pieces all anti-devotional doctrines with his logical arguments of unalloyed devotion. He exposed the camouflage of pseudo-devotees and established the truth that pure devotion is neither intellectualism nor emotionalism, but the eternal spontaneous function of the soul in the unconditioned state. The antidevotional hooligans threatened and tortured him in Town Nabadwip and elsewhere, but he continued to preach the Truth with indescribable tolerance and indomitable courage. He observed that neither fruitive action (i.e. Karma—good or bad deeds done for one's own pleasure) nor empiric knowledge could yield any good to our souls. He taught the whole world the art of utilising every creature and every object of this universe for the loving service of the Absolute Person Sri Krishna. The whole Vaishnava world will remain ever grateful to this great Preceptor for his magnanimous mercy and unparalleled teachings.

Srila Saraswati Thakur was kind enough to reveal the luminous service of Mayapur Yogapith, the Birthsite of Lord Goursundar. Specially the devotees deeply attached to the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar have come to realise the fact, at the heart of their hearts, that the way in which Srila Saraswati Thakur revealed, preached, established and enhanced the glory of the holy place of the Lord's appearance is simply singular and splendid.

Among the innumerable contributions of Srila Saraswati Thakur, the introduction of the circumambulation ceremony of the holy Nabadwip-Dham deserves special mention. Through this

cricumambulation of Gourdham he has wonderfully brought about the eternal and highest good of all persons of all places. Today by his grace, thousands of people throng in Gourdham at the time of the holy Advent Anniversary of Lord Goursundar and rotate round the nine islands of the holy Dham of Nabadwip. At the root of this lies the supreme mercy of Srila Saraswati Thakur.

The comparison of all these gifts of Srila Saraswati Thakur is not possible with those of any other devotee of the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar. Specially in the context of the modern age the analogy of these extraordinary achievements of Srila Saraswati Thakur is hardly available. The processes through which he made his Lord happy were diverse. These included the construction of temples, foundation of Maths, the popular ways of holding meetings and seminars, the deliverance of lectures, the arrangement of exhibitions, the training up of preachers, the publication of books and journals, the distribution of those publications and so on. This glory of his dissemination of the Divine Love of Lord Gauranga will remain ever-written in golden letters in the spiritual history of the world. It is by the mercy of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur that even the people of foreign countries have been fortunate to hear the Voice of Lord Goursundar. This is, indeed, due to the wonderful spiritual power—the magnificent divine device of Srila Saraswati Thakur. The whole credit of all these goes to the benign personality of Om Vishnupad Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur.

**SRĪMAD BHAKTI PRASĀD PURĪ
GOSWĀMĪ THĀKUR**

Srila Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswamī Thākura, an eternal intimate associate of Sri Sri Gour-Krishna, appeared on 25th August, 1895 and disappeared on 8th March, 1958. He descended from Golok (the Eternal Abode of Krishna) to Bhulok (this earth) at the behest of the Supreme Lord in order to preserve the Divine Line of Thakur Bhaktivinode. After the disappearance of his most beloved Gurudeva, Om Vishnupād 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Goswamī Thākura in 1937, he emerged as the next Spiritual Head of the Mission. He was unanimously accepted as the worthy Successor to Srila Saraswati Thakur. Details about this are to be found in Chapter VI of this book. Srila Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur (His Brahmachari-name being Srīla Ananta Vāsudeva — Paravidyābhūsan Prabhu) appeared as a God-sent Jagat-Guru or Universal Master in the Preceptorial Line of Succession that started from the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself. He came as a Divine Messenger in the “Āmnāya Dhārā” carrying the lofty truths direct from the Lord to the people of this world.

He was lovingly called “Srila Acharyadeva” by his devotees. In the present book I have made a very humble endeavour to present Srila Acharyadeva’s transcendental life and teachings. This is, in fact, an almost impossible task for an unworthy soul like me.

With folded hands and prostrated obeisances, I beg for his causeless mercy and pray to his louts-feet to grant me the devotional strength to delineate his transcendental Leelā properly.

SRĪLA BHAKTIPRADĪP TĪRTHA GOSWĀMĪ THĀKUR

In 1877 Srila Bhaktipradip Tirtha Goswami Thakur appeared in a highly cultured and respectable Vaishnava family and was an erudite scholar. He came under the tutelage of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur from whom he got Harinām and Dīkshā (initiation). He was initiated to Sannyas Ashrama by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. He wrote Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in English and compiled Srī Bhāgavata Samlāp and Srīmad-Bhagavad-Geetā in English with text in Sanskrit (Devanagari Script). The latter work received appreciation from all over the world. He preached and propagated the divine teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in India and London. His versatile erudition, scholarship and high standard of spiritual living attracted many to the Lotus-feet of Srila Saraswati Thakur. Moreover, his appealing speeches, his devotion, his simplicity and above all, his mellowed heart which moved at the sight of the sufferings of humanity marked him as a Vaishnava of a very high order. He was Acharya of the Gaudiya Mission for a short period at the end of his career and was succeeded by Srila Guru-Maharaj (Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswami Thakur).

**SŖĪAMAD BHAKTI KEVAL AUDULOMI
GOSWĀMĪ THĀKUR**

(Partly adapted from *A short sketch of the Divine Life of Paramahansa Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Maharaj* by Sri Supati Ranjan Nag M.A.B.L.)

Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami Thakur, the present Preceptor of the Gaudiya Vaishnva Community, has written in a poem—

*Jagatguru Audulomi Abhinna-SrĪ RādhārānĪ
 Radhākunde bihara satata,
VinodinĪ ManjarĪ Tumi Vraja-SundarĪ
 Jugalsevāy sadā rata.*

[*PadāvalĪ* Page No. 64]

(O Srila Audulomi Thakur ! You are the Preceptor of the universe. You are identical with Srimati Radharani. You always stay on the bank of Sri Radhakunda. Your name is SrĪ VinodinĪ ManjarĪ. You are a beauty of Vraja. You are always absorbed in the loving service of the Divine Couple, SrĪ SrĪ Rādhā-Krishna.)

Sri Vinodini Manjari, a very confidential and intimate attendant of Srimati Radha Thakurani appeared as Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswami Thakur in order to preserve the Preceptorial Line and preach the gospels of Unalloyed Devotion. His very name suggests this and is very significant. 'Bhakti-Keval' means Devotion Unalloyed and 'Audulomi' means a great Vaishnava.

A scion of the illustrious Guha Thākurtā family of Bānaripārā, Srila Audulomi Thakur descended on earth as Promodebehari in District Barisal, in 1895 A.D.

His father Sri Saratchandra Guha Thakurta and mother Srimati Bhubanmohini Devi had unwavering devotion to God.

Promodebehari was born with a natural nerve coil around his neck resembling the sacred thread which indicated that he was destined to be a man of noble propensities.

In his early life he had an unbeaten record of standing first in all classes of his school. In 1919 he graduated with Distinction from the Calcutta University. He had deep regard for truth, morality and was endowed with high order of intellectual faculty. In 1913 when he was 18 years old, he had the rare fortune of receiving on the same day the two-fold initiation (*Harinām* and *Dīkṣā*) to Gaudiya Vaishnava faith at the hands of Sri Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami of international fame. He was then awarded the significantly religious name of 'Patitpāban Brahmachārī'.

A week after his initiation he had the splendid opportunity of meeting Sri Srila Sachchidānanda Bhaktivinode Thakur, an ocean of learning and devotion, the Fountain-head of Gaudiya Mission, who was pleased to bless him with the benedictory words "There is no Scripture like *Srimad Bhagavatam* which you are to practise and preach throughout the world."

After graduation he spent two years in Benares where he studied *Sankhya*, *Patanjal*, *Vedanta*, *Upanishads* and other scriptures.

On return from Varanasi he founded *Dharma Rakshinī Sabhā* in his village where he used to read

out and preach the teachings of *Bhakti-yoga*, *Srimad-Bhagavad Geeta*, *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita* and other scriptures. His dynamic personality endeared him to one and all.

He had a melodious voice and could sing well. In sittings of 'Dharma Rakshini Sabha' he used to lead the Kirtan of devotional songs which lent an aroma of solemnity and fervour among the audience.

His knowledge of Sanskrit language was profound. In a meeting of the school teachers and students he delivered an extempore speech in Sanskrit which was highly appreciated by all. He took part in the Freedom Struggle of India. Under his guidance a National School was established in Banaripara of which he was appointed the Headmaster without any emolument. Imparting of religious and moral training formed an important part in his school curriculum.

He excelled in histrionic art himself and enthused the boys in the art and culture of the same. During this period, as a reputed leader he started many social services and philanthropic organisations. After the disappearance of his affectionate mother, he left his family, village and all the beloved institutions which grew up around him, as a celibate, attired in a simple *Brahmacharin* garment, and approached his revered Gurudeva in Calcutta, prostrated himself before him who kindly admitted him to his services as a servitor for life.

As he dedicated himself for the services of the *Guru-griha*, Sri Srila Saraswati Thakur was much pleased

with his fervour, piety and humility. In 1933 he was blessed with an appointment to serve him as Superintendent of Sri Purusottam Math at Puri. Much pleased with his devoted services, Srila Saraswati Thakur very kindly granted him an opportunity for rendering special personal service of an epistoler, a unique service to which only he, along with Sri Srila Acharyadeva, had the good luck to attend.

In appreciation of his services, Srila Saraswati Thakur as President of the '*Navadīpādhāma-Prachārīnī-Sabhā*' was pleased to adorn him with the benedictory epithet of "*Vidyānav*". He was pleased to initiate him to the holy order of a Tridandī Sannyāsī under the sacred designation of "Tridandī Swāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Mahārāj" in 1934. He was then deputed to serve as Superintendent of the Gaudiya Math in New Delhi. He also served "*Thakur Bhaktivinoda Institute*" at Sridham Mayapur, as its Headmaster and '*Bhaktivinoda Research Institute*' as its Rector.

Attracted by the preaching of Gaudiya Mission in England and Germany, Mr. Schulze and Mr. Koeth Baron came to India for further knowledge of the teachings of Lord Chaitanya. Srimad Audulomi Maharaj was entrusted with the task for giving spiritual training to these foreigners, who highly appreciated his expositions. Srimad Audulomi Maharaj was sent in 1936 on a preaching mission to Southern India where his English speeches on the teachings of *Srimad Bhagavatam* helped greatly to spread the name and fame of Gaudiya Mission. After the disappearance of Srila Saraswati

Thakur in 1937, Srila Acharyadeva emerged as the Preceptor and Srila Audulomi Maharaj adored him as the Divine Master identical with Srila Saraswati Thakur. Srila Acharyadeva entrusted Srimad Audulomi Maharaj with the heavy responsibility of carrying on the functions of 'Navadīpādhāma Parikramā' which he performed with great tact, resourcefulness and devotion from 1940 to 1947. During this period he was also in charge of Sri Chaitanya Math, as well as all the other subsidiary maths in Navadwīpmandal. When Sri Srila Acharyadeva, in response to a Divine Call, left and retired from the Mission in 1952 in order to render exclusive and constant service to the Lotus-feet of the Lord at Sri Vrindavan, Sri Srila Bhaktipradīpa Tīrtha Goswami Maharaj in his ripe old age succeeded Him as the President-Acharya. Srimad Audulomi Maharaj during this period rendered meritorious services in steering the helm of the Mission. In October 1953, full moon day, during *Urjāvratā* ceremony, inspired by his Preceptors, Srimad Audulomi Maharaj took a dip in the sacred water of the Jamuna at Vrindavan, gave up his Tridandī Sannyasa costume and embraced the holiest and simplest mantle of a *Paramahansa*. With the craving of a devotee, allured by the *Leela* of the Lord and filled with Transcendental love, he travelled and circumambulated the whole and wide range of Vrajamandal.

As Srila Bhaktipradīpa Tīrtha Maharaj left this mortal world, Sri Srila Audulomi Maharaj appeared on the horizon of Gaudiya Mission and was universally and

spontaneously acclaimed as the Acharya and President of the Mission. The official Installation Ceremony was celebrated on 16th February, 1954. Since then he was popularly known and regarded as the *Guru-Mahārāj* of the Mission. Since his installation year after year, he itinerated from place to place, Math to Math, town after town, Calcutta, Gaya, Benares, Patna, Lucknow, Allahabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Cuttack, Puri and in different places in Bengal and Orissa and broadcasted the Holy name of the Lord. He delivered lectures from different platforms and pulpits among people of every rank, caste and community including Governor, Chief Justice, Mayor, Minister, Vice-chancellor as well as middle class people toiling and struggling for existence, analysing the relative ills and evils of this life and opening up before their souls' eyes the Absolute Kingdom of eternal Bliss and Love. During His regime Gaudiya Mission made marvellous progress in establishing permanent preaching centres in different parts of India. New Temples, *Bhajan Kutirs* and Lecture Halls were built at Chirulia in District Midnapore, at Kishorepura, Sri Vrindavan, at Sri Purusottam Math, Puri, at Gaudiya Maths, Patna, Varanasi, Lucknow, Gaya and New Delhi. At Godrum in *Navadwipmandal* a New Math under the name "Srimad Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Gaudīya Math" was established with a Temple, Lecture Hall, *Bhajan Kutir* and a *Puspa Samadhi* of Sri Srila Saraswati Thakur on a vast wide area. He made big arrangements for *Navadwip-Dham-Parikramā* on the occasion of the Advent Ceremony of Lord Gauranga every year.

Srila Audulomi Thakur manifested his Preceptor-*Leela* for long 28 years—from 1954 to 1982 and preserved the Line of Thakur Bhaktivinode in a unique way. He liberated thousands of souls from the bondage of *Maya* and initiated them in the loving service of the Supreme Lord. He toiled hard to bear the torch of Srimad Bhagabatam from one end of the country to the other.

He revealed the truth that **Srī Nāmasankīrtan** (Congregational Chanting of the Holy Name) and **Srī Bigraha-ārādhana** (Adoration or loving services of the Deities) have been joined together in the Bhaktivinode Line and this is the most efficacious way to attain *Siddhi*. He taught that *darshan* of the Deities (beholding the Deities) is an excellent process of devotion. If we see the Deities, Sri Gurudeva and Vaishnavas with eyes of love and affection, they become happy. So *darshan* itself is a nice service of devotion.

Srila Audulomi Thakur would put much emphasis on dressing the Deities in various ways and preparing various types of palatable dishes for Them and propitiating Them with congregational songs and dance. He would ask his disciples to chant the Holy Name with love, affection, sincerity and regularity and with a view to making the Lord happy. He would pay individual attention to his disciples and spend many sleepless nights praying for their eternal good.

His devotional discourses were very sweet, simple, lucid and systematic. His analytical power was unique. His valuable speeches delivered in different gatherings and personal advice offered to different disciples have

been treasured in *Srīla Guru Mahārājer Srī Harikathā* (10 volumes) and *Srīla Guru Mahārājer Upadeshābālī* (2 volumes). He also composed two beautiful songs of circumambulation of *Sridham Nabadwip* and *Sridham Puri* which are sung regularly by pure devotees all over the world.

Srila Audulomi Thakur disappeared from the world on January 6, 1982 in *Sridham Nabadwip* on the auspicious *Haribāsar Tithi* (the day of *Ekādashī* fasting), chanting aloud *Hare Krishna* before a few pure Vaishnavas at midnight. The picture of his rapturous dance in the Mood of a Divine Milkmaid even at a ripe old age before Lord Godrumbehari in Nabadwip, Lord Jagannath in Puri and Lord Radharaman in Vrindavan still haunts the memory of thousands of his disciples.

SRĪLA BHAKTIBHŪSAN BHĀRATĪ GOSWĀMĪ THĀKUR

Om Vishnupad Paramahansa 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami (lovingly called 'Srī Guruthākura' by the devotees) is the present Preceptor of the Gaudiya Vaishnava World. He is the bona fide *Jagat-Guru* or World Preceptor appearing in the Preceptorial Line of Succession. As there are so many stars but only one Sun in the sky, so in the firmament of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, he shines as the Singular Divine Sun. He is the only preserver of the pure devotional line of Thakur Bhaktivinode in the present world. He is the only custodian of Transcendental Love

in the present time. Without his mercy it is utterly impossible for anyone to practise pure devotion, not to speak of attaining *Siddhi* or final success.

Srila Guru Thakur is identical with Lord Nityananda. **As Lord Gouranga always keeps His dearest Nityananda carefully concealed,** (in *Sri Chaitanya-bhagabat*, Middle Part 8/19 the Lord says to Srivas, "*Mor gopya Nityananda jānīlā se tumi*") Srila Guru Thakur also has been secretly placed by the Lord. He remains and wants to remain always hidden. In the Divine Garden of Vrindavan, he blooms like a hidden jasmine "embowered in its own green leaves" (Shelley). But sincere seekers of Truth are attracted by the sweet scent of this Divine Flower. They may be few in number, but those fortunate few are sure to attain Divine Love which is the summum bonum of life. There were, are and will be many orators, scholars and preachers possessing imposing buildings and a multitude of followers. They can satisfy our intellectual hunger. They can give even temporary mental relief. But only a God-sent Preceptor like Srila Guru Thakur can provide us with the food of our soul and make us realise the eternal peace and bliss of Golok.

Srila Guru Thakur possesses innumerable transcendental qualities of head and heart. But what impresses one most is his extra-ordinary humility. This should not be taken in the sense of mundane modesty or good manners. This *dainya* or humility is an eternal property of Srimati Radharani Herself. As an intimate associate of Srimati Radha Thakurani, Srila Guru Thakur

has been naturally endowed with this transcendental quality. His appearance, clothes, words and behaviour are all marked by this divine quality of humility. The famous verse of Lord Goursundar "*Trinādapi sunīchena*" has been amply exemplified in his character. As he is absorbed day and night in the Divine Mood of Separation from Krishna, this humility is a spontaneous and natural quality in his character.

Srila Guru Thakur appeared in a village named Maishālī in the district of Midnapore in 1925. He came of a religious, wealthy and aristocratic family. His father Srī Baikunthanāth Prāmānik, was an initiated disciple of Om Vishnupad Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswami Thakur. (His *Dīkshā*-name was Srīpad Bishwambhar Dās Adhikāry). His mother, Srīmatī Vidyādhari Devī, also took *Harinam* from the same Preceptor.

The childhood-name of Sri Guru Thakur was "Bimalānanda" (meaning Unalloyed Joy). He was an extra-ordinary child, exceptionally meritorious and meditative in temperament. As a student he had to walk across vast, solitary paddy-fields to reach his school. He had a strange feeling of Krishna coming behind him. He would be constantly thrilled with the smell of *Tulasi* and sandal-paste and the sound of the jingling anklet of Krishna's lotus-feet.

He passed his M.A. examination from Calcutta University and researched on a topic entitled "Sri Chaitanya's Concept of PREMA" under Dr. Brahma Swarup Agrawal M.A., Ph. D. of Agra University. U.P.

He founded a High School and became its Headmaster. He also served several other reputed schools as the Headmaster. He was a staunch moralist right from the beginning and his motto was—"Plain living and high thinking."

A voracious reader, Bimalananda would collect books from foreign countries. He took part in the Freedom Movement of India. He was a powerful speaker, singer, actor and writer from his young age.

In 1955 Sri Bimalananda first met his Divine Master, Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Kēval Audulomi Goswami Thakur in *Sridham* Puri. Enchanted by the sweet personality and discourses of Srila Audulomi Thakur, Sri Bimalananda dedicated himself completely to his lotus-feet. After initiation, he was known as Sri Brajendranandan Das. Renouncing the world, he rendered intimate loving service to his Preceptor. He collected many valuable speeches of his Gurudeva and published them in *Srīla Guru-Mahārājer Srī Harikathā* (Ten Volumes) and *Srīla Guru-Mahārājer Upadeshābali* (Two Volumes). He wrote an immortal biography of his Divine Master. This huge book entitled *Srīla Audulomi Leelā-mādhurī* consists of three volumes and is a unique contribution to Gaudiya Vaishnava Literature. It was he who composed the daily *Ārati-kīrtan* of Srila Audulomi Thakur. He acted as the editor of *Sri Bhaktipatra*, a devotional magazine and was a prolific writer of articles of vaishnava philosophy. He was a constant companion of his Gurudeva and was famous as "the Right Hand of his Preceptor". Srila Audulomi Thakur loved him so much

that he could not bear a day's separation from him. Sri Brajendranandan came to be known as Tridandiswami Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Maharaj, after taking Sannyas-initiation from Srila Audulomi Thakur. Srila Bharati Maharaj toured widely, addressed many meetings in various parts of India and preached the message of Lord Chaitanya specially to the educated section of the society. Srila Audulomi Thakur selected him his private secretary and personal letter-writer. During his life time, Srila Audulomi Thakur hinted at the fact that Sri Bharati Maharaj was his able Successor. He would ask his disciples to go to Srila Bharati Maharaj and listen to his discourses and perform devotional services in accordance with his directions. He would often say—"Sri Bharati Maharaj would distribute your respective services. Go and ask for his directions." Even he asked some of his distinguished disciples to learn the esoteric meaning of the secret *Dīkshā-Mantra* from Srila Bharatī Maharaj. Everyone knows that the *Dīkshā-Mantra* should be heard from none but the Preceptor Himself.

After the disappearance of his Divine Master, Srila Bharati Maharaj became almost mad and his pangs of separation were indescribable. He began to wander over various places in search of his beloved Gurudeva, weeping piteously like a fatherless and helpless baby. He began to sing the glory of his Guru day and night. He had not the least desire to act as the Spiritual Head of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. But apart from his Gurudeva's desire and direct order to him, he received God's direct command in a transcendental vision of Tota

Gopinath in *Sridham* Puri (Gadadhar worshipped this Self-revealed Deity and Lord Goursundar finally merged in this Deity and disappeared from the world). He also received the direct order of Srimati Radharani in Vrindavan and ultimately emerged as the Divine Sun of the present Vaishnava world.

After becoming Acharya, he has laid more emphasis on the practice of *Rūpānugā Bhakti* (the unalloyed devotion in the Line of Srila Rupa Goswami) than the preaching thereof. In the company of the sincere seekers of Truth, he has begun to reveal the secret of the most mysterious *Nām-bhajan* and the loving adoration of the Deity for 24 hours by the example of his own holy life.

Always absorbed in the Divine Mood of Separation, Srila Guruthākura has been leaving no stone unturned to infuse that Mood into the hearts of his followers. A transcendental poet, he has written innumerable poems and songs glorifying the previous Preceptors. He has written an original book on the secret of unalloyed devotion. The title of that authentic book is "*Kebālā Bhaktir Sādhan O Siddhi*." He has published the lives and teachings of his previous Divine Masters. He has spent lakhs of rupees in publishing more than twenty five books of devotional wisdom. These books are free of cost and distributed among the sincere seekers of Truth only. As a Preceptor, he thinks separately for each and every practitioner of devotion. True seekers of Truth are being guided by him with personal care, attention and affection. Srila Guru Thakur has been straining his every nerve in sowing the seeds

of pure devotion among bona fide seekers and nurturing those seeds in all possible ways. He has been silently and secretly preserving the Line of Thakur Bhaktivinode and shouldering incalculable responsibilities as the previous Preceptors did, in the teeth of the opposition of the Dark Forces. Srila Guru Thakur is now staying at the Nabadwip Headquarters of **Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Srikrishna-Chaitanya Sevashram** (Regd.), an institution of unalloyed devotion founded by him after the disappearance of his Divine Master in 1982.



CHAPTER — II

APPEARANCE

There is a beautiful hamlet named Sandīphātā in the district of Noākhālī in East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Śrīla Rajanikanta Basu, a great devotee and pure Vaiṣṇava, lived in that village. He was truthful, benevolent, simple-hearted and well-mannered. He would sincerely practise the principles of unalloyed devotion. He used to observe scriptural prescriptions in his daily life and was a truly devout person. His appearance was sweet and serene and he possessed a pleasing personality that endeared him to all.

Śrīla Basu was a Government Officer, but he would never accept any bribe or adopt any unfair means. He was punctual, dutiful and sincere. He was an erudite scholar with a profound knowledge of devotional scriptures. At home he would regularly read and explain scriptures like the *Gita*, the *Bhagabatam* etc. His wife, Śrīmatī Bidhumukhi Devī was a truly devout lady possessing rare qualities of head and heart. She helped her husband lead the life of a pure householder devotee. In their house there were nice arrangements for the adoration of the Holy Deities and service of the pure devotees. Brahmins and other guests were properly honoured.

Śrīla Basu was an initiated disciple of His divine Grace Om Viṣṇupad 108 Śrī Śrīla Sacchidananda

Bhaktivinode Thakur. He spent last years of his life in Sri Purushottam Math, *Sridham* Puri. His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur blessed him with the attire of *Bābājī* (an advanced Vaishanava mendicant) and gave him the name—Sri Radhagobinda Das Babaji. Srimati Bidhumukhi Devi also spent her later life in Sri Mayapur, *Sridham* Nabadwip. She was also fortunate enough to receive the blessings of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur.

Srīla Rajanīkānta Basu had five sons—Srī Yogendra, Srī Srīnibās, Srī Sudarshan, Srī Hrishikesh and Srī Anantabās. Sri Yogendra was the eldest son and Sri Ananta the youngest. Both of them renounced the world. Yogendra was known as Srila Bhaktipradip Tirtha Goswami Maharaj and Sri Ananta became famous as Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu and later as His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad Srimad Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur.

Srila Puri Goswami Thakur is an eternal intimate of the Supreme Lord. He descended on earth on August. 25, 1895. His parents were extremely happy to see the divine beauty of his face that had a striking resemblance with a newly bloomed lotus. The congregational chanting of the glory of God by the devotees was going on at that auspicious moment. Women were blowing conchshells and making *Ulu* sound (a sound made by Hindu women by moving their tongues within their mouths on festive occasions). Tears of bliss rolled down the cheeks of all who were fortunate enough to have a glance of the divine baby.



CHAPTER — III

BOYHOOD

Dryden says, 'Men are but children of a larger growth'. In the words of Milton 'The child shows the man, as morning shows the day'. As Wordsworth puts it, 'The child is father of the man.'

The sayings of these poets came to be true in the transcendental life of Srila Puri Goswami Thakur. His extraordinary qualities began to reveal themselves right from the beginning of his life. The astrologer who made his horoscope foretold that the child would become a great Spiritual Master in future. As mentioned earlier, his boyhood-name was—Sri Ananta. 'Ananta' literally means 'Infinite' or 'Endless'. In fact, he possessed infinite qualities. He was veritably endowed with an uncommon talent. Right from his childhood, Ananta had a great love for the Supreme Lord Srikrishna. The little baby would stop crying as soon as the chanting of the Names of God entered his ears. He would not take any food however delicious, if it was not offered to God. Everyone was surprised to see this exceptional baby who did not take even his mother's milk. Later on his mother said reminiscing. "Ananta was a lovely child. He had an enchanting smile. His head was covered with curly hair. When he was dressed as 'Gopal', he would dance and dance for hours together. His favourite

game was to worship the Portrait of Sri Gopal. Many times he was found dancing spontaneously before the temple of Sri Krishna."

When Ananta was an eight-year-old boy, he could recite from memory many portions of the *Gita*, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārat*. The fact that he was a person of retentive memory came to be known right from his boyhood. The little boy was capable of remembering whatever he read once only. He memorized many verses of *Srimad Bhagabatam*, the greatest Scripture of Transcendental Wisdom. From his very boyhood he loved and adored *Srimad Bhagabatam* deeply and sincerely.

Ananta had a sweet musical voice. He could sing devotional songs composed by great devotees. Simultaneously he could play on the *mridangam*. His melodious tone coupled with his devotional fervour melted the heart of every listener.

From the early stage of his life he liked to study Sanskrit. His Sanskrit pronunciation was so nice and accurate that his teachers were surprised. Within a few years he became an expert Sanskrit scholar.

Ananta was a brilliant student at school. He was the most favourite student of his teachers who were attracted by his sweet behaviour and his extra-ordinary merit. He was all along the best student of his class.

He passed the I.A. Examination with Distinction from Krishnanath College, Baharampur. Then he graduated from Calcutta University with Hons.in Sanskrit. As

mentioned earlier, Sanskrit was his most favourite subject. He stood First Class First in Sanskrit Hons. Examination.

As a student he was exceptionally meritorious. He had a miraculous memory. He could finish his text books within a short time. His leisure time was spent in the College Library and other Libraries—where he plunged into a deep study of different religious books of various schools of religion. He was a staunch moralist and his ethical standard was very high. He led a pure life of strict restraint and discipline. To him time was very valuable. He did not while away a single moment in idle gossips or cheap pastimes. Unlike other students he had a meditative temperament. While studying he would always sit in *Padmāsana* (a particular posture in religious meditation resembling a blooming lotus). While his friends indulged in various types of recreations, he was found deeply engrossed in serious study of devotional scriptures. Thus it was evident from the beginning that he was cut out to be a person extra-ordinary. His most favourite scripture was *Srimad Bhagabatam*. He became a genuine scholar of *Bhagabat Dharma* and an authentic exponent of *Srimad Bhagabatam* at an early stage of his life.

Ananta was a good orator and a fine debater. He could easily refute the arguments of his opponents and establish his view with persuasive eloquence. Once while he was staying in Gouri Bari Lane, Calcutta along with his elder brother, a pleader came to their residence

with a view to defeating the boy in a debate. The shrewd lawyer put forth many clever arguments, but these were shattered into pieces by Ananta's scholarly speech. The subtlety and originality of his thought and expression made the pleader silent and surprised. At last he remarked with reverential awe—"You will be a great man in future."



CHAPTER IV

RECEIVING THE BLESSINGS OF THAKUR BHAKTIVINODE AND MEETING HIS DIVINE MASTER

While Sri Ananta was a student, he heard the name of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode who was then carrying on his preaching work from four main centres. One was Maniktala, Calcutta and the other was—*Sridham Godrum* (now Swarupganj) in Nabadwip, Nadia. The other two centres were situated at *Sri Bhaktikuthi* on the beach of Puri (near the Samadhi Temple of Thakur Haridas) and *Sri Prapannāshram*, Sāūrī, Midnapore. The name of the preaching centre established by him at *Sridham Godrum* was *Swānanda Sukhada Kunja*. Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur used to stay here with the noble mission of discovering the Birthsite of the Supreme Lord Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and revealing the transcendental glory of the Holy Place of the Lord to the whole world. He would observe the auspicious days of Appearance of the Lord and His Devotees with due devotional ardour. Pure devotees would gather from various places and solemnise these festivals with congregational chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord day in and day out. Srila Gourkishore Das Babaji Maharaj, the most celebrated *Abadhuta* Vaishanava of that time, used to participate in these festivals.

One day, many distinguished Vaishanava saints gathered there on the occasion of some devotional festival. By chance Sri Ananta came to that place and attended the festival. He was but seventeen years old at that time. At his very first sight, the transcendental traits and signs of his divine body captivated the affectionate attention of Thakur Srila Bhaktivinode. In order to reveal the extra-ordinary qualities of Srila Ananta to all the devotees present there, Thakur Bhaktivinode asked him to sing some devotional songs composed by great Vaishanava poets. Srila Ananta prostrated himself at his lotus-feet and humbly carried out his order. The sweetness of his solemn voice, the sincerity of his feeling and the meditative tone of his songs had a great appeal to all the devotees present there. Everyone listened to him spellbound and realised that he was not an ordinary boy and that he was a God-sent Saint who descended on earth to fulfil some special will of the Supreme Lord. Thakur Bhaktivinode was extremely happy and showered his affectionate blessings on Sri Ananta.

While Sri Ananta was sixteen years old, one day he came to Calcutta along with his father and elder brother and visited "Bhaktibhaban" situated in Rambagan, Calcutta. "Bhaktibhaban" (i.e. House of Devotion) was the name of the preaching centre of Thakur Bhaktivinode in Calcutta. Sri Ananta came to that house and met his Divine Master Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur for the first time. At that time Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode was seated on a chair. Srila Saraswati Thakur sat at his lotus-feet and

was absorbed in chanting the Names of the Supreme Lord. At a little distance Srila Krishnadas Babaji, a pure devotee and servitor of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode, sat on the veranda. Everyone prostrated himself at the lotus-feet of Thakur Bhaktivinode and paid obeisance to him. Srila Thakur Mahasaya showered his mercy on everybody present there and said, "May you attain the supreme good!" After that he spoke about the teachings of Sri Chaitanya for a few minutes.

Srila Ananta paid his second visit to "Bhaktibhaban" in 1918 after the disappearance of Thakur Bhaktivinode. He came along with his elder brother—Srila Srinivasa (later on famous as His Holiness Srimad Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Goswami Maharaj). Both the brothers came to see the lotus-feet of Srila Saraswati Thakur. They fell at his feet with tearful eyes and paid obeisances to him. Srila Saraswati Thakur asked Srila Ananta to sing a devotional song. The latter started a prayer-song composed by Thakur Bhaktivinode—*Kabe habe balo se din āmār* ! (i.e. When will that blessed time come in my life!) Listening to his mellifluous voice everyone rushed to that spot and stood motionless and still. Tears rolled down the cheeks of all the listeners. Srila Saraswati Thakur became extremely pleased and asked Srila Ananta to memorise all the songs written by Thakur Bhaktivinode.

Sometime after, Srila Ananta humbly asked Srila Saraswati Thakur one question about a book written by Raja Rammohan Roy. In that book Roy tried to belittle

Vaishnavism and Srimad Bhagabat. Srila Ananta said, "Prabhu, is it not possible to refute the false arguments put forward by Roy ? Can't we establish the fact that Srimad Bhagabat is the unalloyed commentary on the Vendanta ?" Srila Saraswati Thakur was extremely happy to hear this spirited question of this young devotee and answered, "Don't worry. Very soon the fallacious inference of Roy will be shattered into pieces by the Transcendental Truth of Srimad Bhagabat. The Divine light of pure Vaishnavism will dispel the darkness of all false doctrines. Eternal Truth will undoubtedly triumph over falsehood.

On March 29, 1918, Srila Ananta received initiation from His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhnata Saraswati Thakur. After initiation his new name was Srīla Anantavāsudeva Brahmachārī. Srila Anantavasudeva decided to renounce the world and stay in the abode of his Gurudeva. His sincere devotion to the lotus-feet of his Divine Master and his extra-ordinary command over the scriptures endeared him to Srila Saraswati Thakur, who kept him always by his side. Srila Saraswati Thakur was all praise for Sri Anantavasudeva Prabhu and loved him more than any other disciple. Though Srila Saraswati Thakur had many learned and senior Sannyasi disciples, he gave Sri Anantavasudeva the topmost position in his heart. He would often speak highly of the divine merits of Sri Anantavasudeva to his other disciples. He would remark—"In the present world, there is no such scholar

of *Srimad Bhagabatam* as Sri Anantavasudeva". Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur was so pleased with Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu that he could not bear separation from Srila Vasudeva even for a single day. In fact Srila Anantavasudeva was the Second Self of His Divine Grace Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur.



CHAPTER — V

RENDERING LOVING, INTIMATE SERVICE TO HIS DIVINE MASTER

Sri Anantavasudeva would remain ever absorbed in rendering three types of loving service to his Divine Master—(1) Service in the form of discourse, (2) Service in the form of personal attendance and (3) Service in the form of fulfilling the cherished desire of the master. Srila Anantavasudeva would not waste even a single moment in anything other than the service of His Gurudeva. The depth of his love and affection for his Divine Master was simply unfathomable. Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur was naturally attracted and charmed by the sincerity and intensity of his loving heart.

Srila Vasudeva Prabhu's devotion to the Divine Preceptor was really unparalleled. He would not take anything except the leavings of food tasted by his Gurudeva. Sometimes, it so happened that he could not get the *prasada* of his Gurudeva owing to some circumstances. He would go without food on that day. As soon as Srila Saraswati Thakur came to know this, he would immediately call Srila Vasudeva to his lotus-feet and would affectionately feed him some milk or fruit after touching those things in his lips. Srila Saraswati Thakur engaged him in the confidential service of writing

letters. Srila Vasudeva rendered this intimate service with absolute love, care and attention. He would become so engrossed in writing letters that he would often forget his lunch time. Srila Saraswati Thakur would ask him to stop writing and take *prasād*. Many times, Srila Saraswati Thakur made him write precious articles on unalloyed devotion or subtle annotations of *Srimad Bhagabatam*. He would affectionately call Srila Anantavasudeva "My *Ganesha*". The word *Ganesha* is the combined form of two words—*Gana* (i.e. group) and *T̄sha* (i.e. Leader). So, by using the word *Ganesha* Srila Saraswati Thakur hinted at the divine secret that Srila Anantavasudeva would be his suitable Successor or the Leader of the group of pure devotees.

At the time of the composition of the *Mahabharat*, Sri Ganesha could comprehend the esoteric meaning of the subtle *Vyāsakūta* (enigmatic passage in the writings of Vyasa) and take down the dictations of Sri Vyasadeva accurately. In the like way, Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu could dive deep into the heart of his Gurudeva and give proper expression to the sublime thoughts rising therein. Srila Saraswati Thakur observed, "Those things which I have said suggestively, have been clarified and elaborated by Srila Vasudeva Prabhu in a beautiful style."

When Srila Saraswati Thakur became fully absorbed in discoursing upon the glory of Hari in some meeting, he would sometimes ask Srila Vasudeva Prabhu some verses from devotional scriptures. Srila Vasudeva was

talented with a miraculous memory. He could recite the relevant verses immediately. Srila Saraswati Thakur was charmed to see his extra-ordinary command over the scriptures. Srila Vasudeva Prabhu would always accompany Srila Saraswati Thakur when the latter went to various places of India on preaching mission. Endowed with a fabulous memory, Srila Vasudeva would collect the speeches delivered by his Spiritual Master at different places.

Srī Vyāsapūjā (worship of the Divine Preceptor) began to be solemnised from the 50th Advent Anniversary of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. It was Srila Vasudeva Prabhu who first organised this auspicious festival. It was he who wrote the first homage on the occasion of *Srī Vyāsapūjā*. He composed hymns, songs, poems etc. in praise of the transcendental glory of his Divine Master and also wrote Sanskrit verses for paying obeisances to his Preceptor. He introduced the holy custom of adding 'Om Vishnupad' before the name of the Divine Master. Besides, he established holy shrines at places sanctified by the divine footsteps of the Spiritual Preceptor. In a word, Sri Vasudeva Prabhu became totally absorbed in rendering all sorts of intimate loving service to His Beloved Preceptor.

Srila Saraswati Thakur blessed him with two devotional
 ~ Titles ***Paravidyā-bhūsan*** (i.e. Adorned with Transcen-
 ~ dental Knowledge) and ***Mahāmohapadeshak*** (i.e. the Great Divine Teacher) on behalf of "Srī Nabadwīp-dhām

Prachārīnī Sabhā” (a society formed to preach the glory of *Sridham Nabadwip*). We are quoting below some portions of the Benediction Certificate of Lord Gouranga duly signed by the lotus-hand of Srila Saraswati Thakur. This Divine Certificate was ceremonially conferred upon Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu on the auspicious day of observing the holy advent of Lord Gouranga in 1918.

*“Srī-Gourāṅga-Guru-prestham tadavīṣhta-prapūrakam,
Haripriya-janair-gamyam brahmacharay-prabardhakam.
Bhūshayantam parām vidyām sadānanda-rasāplutam,
Vaikuntha-jñānadīpena bhāsayantam disho dasa.
Anantavāsudevākhyam anantaguna-manditam.
Srīmantam tam samāsādyā swāshrayam paramottamam.
Lavatām paramām kāntim Mahāmahopadeshakah,
Ityeshā mahatī khyātih Srīkāntam Koustubho yathā.”*

(Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu is endowed with infinite transcendental qualities. He is the dearest intimate of Guru and Gouranga—the fulfiller of Their Divine Desires. His glory is accessible only to the pure devotees of Hari. He is the perfect protector of pure celibacy. He is possessed of transcendental knowledge. He is ever-absorbed in tasting the mellow bliss of divine love. Ten directions of the globe have been illuminated by him with the Light of Transcendental wisdom. As the gem *Koustubha* shines more and more in the reflected glory of Lord Narayana who wears it on His bosom, so the title *Mahamahopadhesak* itself will be blessed to be conferred upon its own Supreme Object of Shelter, His Holiness Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu.)

The above-mentioned verses bear ample testimony to the fact that Srila Vasudeva Prabhu was held in high esteem by Srila Saraswati Thakur. Many a time, Srila Saraswati Thakur remarked, "Such an ideal proof-reader as Sri Vasudeva is not in evidence anywhere. No one can escape his ever-awake eyes. He can easily detect the secret fault of any practitioner of unalloyed devotion."

Thus during his life-time Srila Saraswati Thakur clearly indicated Srila Anantavasudeva Paravidyabhusan Prabhu as his worthy Successor in the Divine Preceptorial Line. When Srila Saraswati Thakur composed the famous Gaudiya Commentary of *Srimad Bhagabatam*, he clearly wrote in the preface of the *Anantagopāl* Tathya of that commentary—*Vāsudevānanta-dāsyē thākiyā to sadā laho Nām*. (Always chant the Holy Name, remaining a faithful servant of Srila Anantavasudeva).

Sometimes Srila Saraswati Thakur would pay a kind visit to the house of some wealthy person with a view to preaching the divine message of Lord Chaitanya. He would be kind enough to accept many precious things after offering them to the Deity. His followers would also accept gladly all sorts of food offered to God. But Sri Vasudeva was a devotee with a difference. He would take only one grain from the leavings of food taken by his Divine Master and would remain fasting day after day. When others asked him the reason of such behaviour, he humbly answered, "Srila Saraswati Thakur is identical with Lord Nityananda. He is capable of accepting food offered even by a worldly rich man. He

does so to shower causeless mercy on all. But such a petty creature like me should control the greed of tongue and must not take the food of the worldly rich as it makes our mind unclean. I fear to take the food of the worldly wealthy class lest I should go astray from the path of pure devotion". Seeing such a strict adherence to the principles of unalloyed devotion in the behaviour of Srila Vasudeva Prabhu, his senior God-brothers, monks and all other disciples began to look upon him with reverential awe.

As mentioned earlier, he was a good singer and player of the *mridangam*. He would sing melodiously the songs composed by Srila Narottam Thakur and Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur. Even stony hearts would be melted at the devotional sweetness of his divine tone. But there was a speciality about him. If any man, however famous and powerful, requested Srila Vasudeva Prabhu to sing for the gratification of his material ears, he would reject it outright. But as soon as Srila Saraswati Thakur asked him to sing, he would carry out his order instantaneously and unhesitatingly. He would not consider his personal inconvenience or physical illness at that time and used to satisfy his Divine Master by singing devotional songs in accordance with His desire. Thus Srila Vasudeva Prabhu taught others not to sing for the entertainment of the worldly people. Singing should not be used for gathering material name and fame, money and woman. It should be used solely for pleasing the transcendental ears of God and His pure devotees.

One day Srila Vasudeva Prabhu himself composed a unique song of devotion. The song begins like this—

"Ohe Premer Thākur Gorā!

Prāner jātanā kibā kabo Nāth

Hayechhi āpan-hārā".

The whole song is full of such sincerity of appeal and composed of such well-chosen words and phrases as captivated the heart of Lord Goursundar. While Srila Vasudeva Prabhu was singing it by himself, Srila Saraswati Thakur heard it from the adjacent room. He listened to the song with rapt attention. He was charmed by the sad but sweet tone of the singer and asked his personal attendant, "Who is singing this song?" When the servitor mentioned the name of Srila Vasudeva Prabhu, a beatific smile appeared on the lips of Srila Saraswati Thakur.

In 1929 Srila Saraswati Thakur himself wrote an essay on the divine qualities of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu for publication in the daily *Nadiyāprakāsh*. In that article Srila Saraswati Thakur described Srila Vasudeva Prabhu as the sincere follower of Sri Rupa Goswami, as the dearest one of Lord Guru and Gouranga, as a pure devotee of spotless, ideal character, as a unique expert in the esoteric philosophy of unalloyed devotion and as the peerless, Universal Preceptor. The manuscript of that article was handed over to Srila Vasudeva Prabhu by a person for his kind perusal. Srila Vasudeva Prabhu concealed that essay in such a secret place that it could not be printed and published in the *Nadiyaprakash*. He

remarked, "If I ostentatiously announce myself as a Vaishnava by displaying the certificate of Srila Saraswati Thakur to others, I shall cease to be a selfless servant of His lotus-feet. A pure servitor should not use his master in his own service. A pure servitor never runs after any ulterior desire except the loving service of the Divine Master" [See the *Gaudiya*, 16th year, 12th-13th issue, Page No. 203].

Before concluding this chapter, we want to quote a remark of Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu (Prof. N. K. Sanyal, Cuttack Ravenshaw College) about the distinguishing feature of Srila Acharyadeva's *Guru-Sevā*. Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu writes in one part of his Diary (16.8.38., Tuesday)—"Direct communion with the Guru is the first step on the path of Divine Service. Exclusive service of the Guru is the next expansion of the same. The Guru is to be served in every entity. If the Guru is not served, no one can be really served. **For a very long time I was noticing that Srila Acharyadeva made it his exclusive duty, esoteric as well as exoteric, not to serve anybody else except Srila Saraswati Thakur.** For this purpose he kept aloof from all active participation in most of the mixed functions of others. He remained strictly aloof from all other concerns. He was not accessible to any but those whom he really wanted to guide on behalf of Srila Saraswati Thakur." [The *Gaudiya*, 18th year, 32nd Issue, Page No.488—489]



CHAPTER — VI

SRĪLA ANANTAVĀSUDEVA PRABHU APPEARING AS THE WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO SRĪLA SARASWATĪ THĀKUR—AS THE SPIRITUAL HEAD OF THE MISSION.

His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur disappeared from this world on January 1, 1937. According to the divine wishes of Srila Saraswati Thakur, Srila Anantavasudeva Paravidyabhusan Prabhu was unanimously accepted as the worthy Successor in the Preceptorial Line.

He appeared as the President-cum-Acharya of the Gaudiya Mission. In accordance with the direct direction of Srila Saraswati Thakur, Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu emerged as the next Spiritual Head. Clear evidence of this is to be found in the weekly journal *Gaudiya* (16th year: 3rd issue, Page No. 47). Here we are translating it from original Bengali—**Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur gave clear instructions regarding the next Preceptor. Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu is his intimate disciple bearing an ideal character. Srila Vasudeva Prabhu possesses the transcendental knowledge about the Supreme Truth—Krishna. All pure devotees know it quite well**

that Srila Vasudeva Prabhu has been performing the duties of a Preceptor since the very life-time of Srila Saraswati Thakur. In the morning of December 23, 1936, Srila Saraswati Thakur affectionately called Srila Vasudeva Prabhu to his bed-side in the presence of many devotees and directly ordered him to act as the Spiritual Head in the Preceptorial Line of Srila Rupa Goswami. Many Members of *Srī* Viśva-Vaiṣṇava-Rājāsabhā directly saw and heard this. Moreover, in the Gaudiya commentary of *Srīmad Bhagabatam* Srila Saraswati Thakur gave clear command to all for always chanting the Holy Names of Sri Hari under the guidance and allegiance of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu. Besides, in the Benediction Certificate of "*Srīdhām* Prachārīnī Sabhā" and in various other places, Srila Saraswati Thakur described Srila Vasudeva Prabhu as well-versed in the Absolute Sound and the Absolute Person, the dearest one of Lord Guru and Gouranga, the fulfiller of the inner desire of the Spiritual Master, the follower of the Divine Path of Golden Mean and an ideal person of spotless character. It was Srila Vasudeva Prabhu who alone was entrusted with all spiritual responsibilities and absolute authority by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur in his final message as well as final letter. Therefore, the command of Srila Saraswati Thakur regarding his Successor-Preceptor is crystal clear.

The installation ceremony of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu as the Spiritual Head was duly solemnised at

Sri Yogapith, Sridham Mayapur on March 26, 1937, the auspicious day of Descent of the Supreme Lord of Love Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Many outstanding disciples of Srila Saraswati Thakur attended the function. They included Srimad Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Vivek Bharati Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Hriday Ban Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Bilas Gavastinemi Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Swarup Parvat Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Bhudev Srouiti Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Bijnan Ashram Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Sambandha Turyashrami Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Samba Bhagabat Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Sudhir Jachak Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Baibhab Sagar Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Sarbeswar Giri Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Bichar Jajabar Maharaj, Srimad Bhakti Prakash Aranya Maharaj, Sripad Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu, (Prof. N. K. Sanyal of Cuttack Ravenshaw College), Sripad Sundarananda Vidyavinode Prabhu, (Editor, *The Gaudiya*) Sripad Binodebehari Kritiratna Prabhu, Sripad Rupavilas Prabhu (later on known as Srimad Bhakti Srirup Bhagabat Maharaj), Sripad Subhabilas Prabhu, Sripad Sakhicharan Roy Bhaktivijoy, Sripad Haripada Vidyaratna, Sripad Narayan Brahmachari, Sri Supatiranjan Nag (Ex-Professor Of Dacca Jagannath College), Sri Dinesh Ch. Dey (Editor, "*Swāyatta Shāsan Patra*" Dacca), Sri Ramgopal Vidyabhusan M.A., Sri Sachinath Ray Chaudhury (Zamindar of Alaya, Mymensingh), Sri Kshirod Ch. Sen Roy Bahadur (Retd. Superintending Engineer of Bihar

and Orissa), Pandit Sri Nandadulal Kavyatirtha, Sri Lalit Mohan Basu (Retd. Sub-Judge) and others. With the cheerful support of all the disciples and devotees, Sripad Kunjabehari Vidyabhusan Prabhu first shouted ovation for the previous Preceptors and then applied sandal-paste offered to the Deities on the forehead of His Divine Grace Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu and also garlanded him amidst congregational chanting of *Haribol*, loud sound of conches and *Ulu*. Then he declared the glory of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu as the new Preceptor and paid obeisances to him. All the devotees collectively greeted the new Preceptor with ovation and fell prostrate on the ground at his lotus-feet. The chorus-chanting of the glory of the new Acharya rent the air—"All Glory to His Divine Grace Srila Anantavasudeva Paravidya-bhusan Prabhu".

At noon the new Preceptor was kind enough to give *Harinām* (the first stage of initiation) to more than a hundred devotees. Among these fortunate disciples were Sri Nadiyananda Das, Sri Bishwambhar Das, Sri Yogamaya Das, Sri Srinath Das, Sri Uday Jana, Dr. Rajendra Biswas, Sri Ishwar Jana and others.

The news of the installation ceremony of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu as the Spiritual Head of the Gaudiya Mission was sent to the offices of various Newspapers by Sri Kunjabehari Vidyabhusan, Secretary of the Mission. A copy of that Press Message duly signed by the Secretary is published below from *The Gaudiya*, 16th year, Page No. 50—

PRESS MESSAGE

SREEDHAM MAYAPUR, NABADWIP, 26th March, 1937—

His Holiness Mahamahopadesak Srila Anantavasudeva Paravidyabhusan Prabhu has been declared by the management of the Gaudiya Mission this morning as Acharya or Spiritual Head of the Mission in succession to His Divine Grace Paramahansa Sree Sreemad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj, entered into *Nityaleela*.

His Holiness Tridandiswami Sreemad Bhakti Vivek Bharati Maharaj has been declared Chairman, Mahamahopadesak Sripad Kunjabehari Vidyabhusan Bhagabat-ratna has been declared Secretary.

(Signature Of the Secretary with date)

It is interesting to note that Sri Kunjabehari Vidyabhusan was very enthusiastic about the selection of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu as the Spiritual Head of the Mission. This enthusiasm is in evidence in a letter and telegram that he sent to Sripad Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu (Prof. Nishikanta Sanyal, Cuttack) on 09-02-1937. Interested readers may kindly see the exact block of that letter and telegram printed in the *Gaudiya Patrika* (16th year, 3rd Issue, Page No. 49-50).

The text of the telegram reads like this :

My View Regarding Selection Agrees with you—
Kunjabehari.

The translated form of the original letter in Bengali is as follows :

All Glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga.

Telegram : Gaudiya
Telephone : B.B. 4115

16A, Kaliprasad
Chakravorty Street.
P.O.-Baghbazar,
Calcutta
9.2.1937.

With innumerable obeisances to the feet of the Great
Bhakta-Bhagabat—

Revered Sripad Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu,

I have attentively read your kind letter dated Feb. 5
and Feb. 8.

**I declare my own eternal, absolute allegiance to
the Spiritual Leadership of His Holiness—Sri
Vasudeva Prabhu.**

“ I have personally decided to reveal the selection
of the Acharya at the time of offering homage to His
lotus-feet on the auspicious Vyasapuja Day.

I don't think that anyone has ever gone against the
decision of His Holiness Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu,
since the time of disappearance of Srimad Bhakti
Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. And no such
news has reached me as yet.

More when we meet on the Sunday morning.

Humbly yours,
Sd-Kunjabehari Vidyabhusan

Sri Kunjabehari spoke Of “**eternal absolute
allegiance**” to the new Preceptor. But as ill-luck would

have it, he withdrew that allegiance within a few months and left the Mission. Several monks followed in his footsteps and quit the Mission. Ultimately all of them became self-styled Gurus. They filed various false cases in different Courts. Sri B.S. Parvat Maharaj belonging to the group of Kunjababu filed a defamation case against His Divine Grace Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu and others. But truth triumphed over falsehood. Kunjababu's group was defeated. A portion of the verdict given by Mr. B. C. Ghose, Hon'ble Magistrate of Alipore Court, on September, 21, 1938 is quoted below (from the Gaudiya, 17th Yr. 10th Issue)—

Under section 500 I.P. Code

"Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu was duly declared the Spiritual Head of the Mission in accordance with the last wishes of the Founder-President.

It will appear from the "Saptahik Gaudiya" (EX-'E') dated 17-04-1937 that Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu was installed as the Spiritual Head on 26-03-37 at Mayapur (Nadia) and the proposal was accepted by Kunja Babu and others. This journal also contains photographs of installation ceremony."

A news under the heading "Gaudiya Math and Mission : Constitution Registered" was published in the *East Bengal Times*. Saturday, May 25, 1940. A portion of that news is mentioned below—

"Acharya Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode, for preaching

the true teachings of Sriman Mahaprabhu, founded the Institution which, under the able guidance of his illustrious successor Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Prabhupad, from its parent Math at Sree Mayapur, the birth place of Mahaprabhu, conducted the missionary activities, on establishment of numerous Maths in India, Burmah and England with working centre in Calcutta under the name of Gaudiya Mission. **On the demise of Srila Prabhupad (Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur), according to his last wishes, a Governing Body was elected for management of the Mission and the Acharyaship devolved on Srila Ananatavasudeva Para-Vidyabhusan, after Sannyasa known as Srila Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami, who was acclaimed and installed by the Governing Body and all the members and disciples assembled at the Holy birth place of Mahaprabhu on 26.03.37 as the Spiritual Head of the Mission in succession to Srila Prabhupad (Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur).**

[Quoted from the *Gaudiya*, 18th Vol. 44-45 Issue, Page 697]

When Srila Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur appeared as the World-Preceptor or the Divine Sun in succession to Srila Saraswati Thakur, sincere seekers of Truth all over the world were overjoyed. They adored the new Preceptor as the Second Self of Srila Saraswati Thakur. They submitted themselves to his lotus-feet unconditionally and wholeheartedly. They began to send tributes to his holy feet expressing their allegiance to

him and humbly craving for his causeless mercy. One such sincere soul was Srimati Vinodevani Dasi, alias Miss D. C. Bowtell of London, who was an initiated disciple of Om Vishnupad Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Here we are presenting a beautiful Vyasa Puja Homage offered to the lotus-feet of Srila Acharyadeva by Srimati Vinodevani.

Sree Vyasa Puja Homage

(By Vinodevani Dasi, Sree Vasudev Gaudiya Math London, 6.9.40)

**To The Holy Lotus Feet of His Divine Grace Om
Vishnupad Paramahansa Paribrajak Acharya
Astottarasata (108) Sri Srimad Bhakti Prasad
Puri Goswami Prabhu.**

On the Occasion of

***The Forty-fifth Anniversary of His most Auspicious
Advent.***

Our Most Revered Divine Master,

We, Thy Divine Grace's most unworthy servitors of Sree Vasudev Gaudiya Math, 51 Downs Road, London beg to submit our humble selves to Thy Holy Lotus Feet on the Day of Thy Most Auspicious Advent. We convey our best sincere entreaty to Thy Beautiful Lotus Feet for the boon of Thy Benign Guidance so as to make us fit for Thy Holy Service. O Thou Teacher of the Truth and Guide to the life Eternal and of Freedom ! We can only be made deserving of Your Grace in and by the process of being delivered by Thy Causeless Mercy.

We pray at Thy Lotus Feet for the disposition of absolute repugnance for untruth and all followers of untruth and equally, absolute sympathy for all followers of Truth of all grades. Those who choose to be guided by You and Your Eternal Associates have their eyes turned towards the Source of Light.

We pray at Thy Holy Feet in all sincerity that we may be enabled by Your Grace to progress towards the purpose you have in view in regard to us and that we may cherish for Your Associates for all eternity only the relationship of our unconditional submission and service to them. May we never forget that it is only by admitting unreservedly their eternal superiority to ourselves that we can be made worthy of practising unconditional submission to Thy Holy Feet.

Under Super-natural loving ties of All-Love, Your Divine Grace as Expert of All-Things Transcendental and Healer of all ills, will eliminate the pangs of world-diseases of the conditioned souls of Kali Yuga. Thou wilt exercise Thy power of tearing off the manifold fetter of material attachments for the uplift of their souls.

We pray at Thy Lotus Feet for the spiritual regeneration of all mankind.

In offering this homage of our souls to Thy Holy Feet we have sought inspiration of the pure Devotees who always teach us how to serve you.



SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA AND HIS ASSOCIATES

The associates of Srila Acharyadeva were all extraordinary saints endowed with exceptional, divine qualities. All of them were *Siddha* Vaishnavas and belonged to the topmost category of devotees. The name of **Srīla Nārāyan Dās Bhaktisudhākar Prabhu** deserves first mention here.

When Kunjababu left the Mission, Sripad Narayan Das Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu (Prof. N.K.Sanyal) became the new Secretary of Gaudiya Mission. He was an intimate and affectionate disciple of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. A Professor of international repute, he was Head of the Deptt. of History in Cuttack Ravenshaw College. Inspired by the divine discourses of Srila Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaj and Srila Anantavasudeva Paravidyabhusan Prabhu, Prof. Sanyal completely dedicated himself to the lotus-feet of His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. During the Summer Vacation of 1925, Prof. Sanyal came to Sri Gaudiya Math, Calcutta and had a week-long conversation with Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu who convinced him of the supremacy of the path of pure devotion to the Absolute Person, Sri Krishna. After listening to the soul-stirring discourses of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu for seven days, Prof. Sanyal

saw in a dream that a Sannyasi was advising him to attain eternal good by taking shelter at the lotus-feet of His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. The appearance of that monk was identical with that of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu. 14 years after, Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu revealed his Sannyasa-*leela* and Prof. Sanyal fully realised the veracity of his old dream.

Prof. Sanyal became completely dovetailed with the lotus-feet of his Spiritual Master. He rendered valuable literary service in various forms. He became editor of the *Harmonist*, a unique devotional journal, wrote some scholarly books on Vaishnava philosophy and penned innumerable articles on the teachings of Sri Chaitanya which were published in famous newspapers and periodicals of the day. His magnum opus "*Sree Krishna Chaitanya*" is a voluminous and authentic work in English on the transcendental life and teachings of the Supreme Lord of Love, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. His plain living, humble behaviour, incredible scholarship and above all, his total dedication to his Spiritual Master, made him a charismatic personality to one and all both in the academic and the spiritual world. He had not the least longing for name and fame. He would offer his total monthly salary to his Divine Master and he spent every moment of his sacred life for the unalloyed loving service of his most beloved Gurudeva. Srila Saraswati Thakur was all praise for him and described him as "a perfect, pure and real *Tridandī* (i.e. devotional monk) and a self-dedicated soul" (the *Gaudiya*, 11th year, 32nd Issue).

Srila Saraswati Thakur was so pleased with the selfless, confidential loving service of Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu that he remarked at the time of his divine disappearance from the world—"I am indebted to Professor Babu (Prof. N.K.Sanyal)". [The *Gaudiya*, 18th Issue.]

Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu would always regard Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu as the Second Self of Srila Saraswati Thakur. In the very beginning of his "Sree Vyasa Puja Homage" written just on the previous day of his disappearance, Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu wrote—"I make my prostrated obeisances to the lotus-feet of His Divine Grace Om Vishnupād Paramahansa Parivrājakācharya (108) Srī Srīmad Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswāmī Mahārāj, the manifest Other-self and Divine Successor to my Divine Master Nityalila-pravista Om Vishnupad Paramahansa Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur." In one part of his personal diary Srila Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu wrote (June 20, 1938)—"**It is certain that I shall owe allegiance to Srila Acharyadeva even at the cost of my life.**" It should be mentioned here that Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu took Sannyas in the holy Dham of Gaya in 1937 and came to be known as Srimad Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur. He was lovingly called "Srila Acharyadeva" by the devotees.

Another associate of Srila Acharyadeva was **Om Vishnupād Srīmad Bhakti Pradīp Tīrtha Goswāmī Thākur**. In the previous Ashram, he was the elder brother of Srila Acharyadeva. He received initiation from the

lotus-feet of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur. He was the first Sannyasi-disciple of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. This seniormost monk was loved and respected by one and all for his devotion, erudition and childlike simplicity. He was a powerful speaker, renowned writer and international preacher. He adored Srila Acharyadeva as the Second Self of Srila Saraswati Thakur. In the 'Introduction' to his English Translation of '*Srimad Bhagavad-Gita*', Srila Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Goswami Maharaj wrote—"While I was preaching the doctrine of Divine Love in England, as a humble servant of the Gaudiya Mission in 1933-35, I was inspired by my Divine Master Om Vishnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada, to render the Sanskrit and the Gaudiya annotations of the Gita into English, a work which had been left unfinished by my Divine Master, now entered into *Nityaleela** * * I dedicate this humble work to the Lotus Palms of His Divine Grace Om Vishnupada Parivrajakacharya 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur, the present Spiritual Head of the Gaudiya Mission in Apostolic Succession, who has kindly approved and sanctioned its publication."

Another staunch follower of Srila Acharyadeva was **Om Vishnupād Srīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākur**. He was an intimate associate of Srila Acharyadeva. Both Srila Acharyadeva and Srila Audulomi Maharaj appeared in this world in 1895. Both were initiated by the same Spiritual Master Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. Both were fortunate enough to receive

the direct blessings of Thakur Bhaktivinode. Both Srila Acharyadeva and Srila Audulomi Maharaj were very close to the heart of His Divine Grace Srila Saraswati Thakur. Much pleased with their complete dedication and self-effacing love, Srila Saraswati Thakur granted both of them the rare opportunity of rendering special personal service to the Guru as his letter-writer.

After the disappearance of Srila Saraswati Thakur, Srila Acharyadeva emerged as the next Spiritual Head of the Mission and Srila Audulomi Maharaj looked upon him nōt as his Godbrother, but as the Second Self of Srila Saraswati Thakur. Srila Acharyadeva entrusted Srimad Audulomi Maharaj with the heavy responsibility of carrying on the functions of Navadwipdham Parikrama which he performed year after year with great tact, resourcefulness and devotion from 1940 to 1947. During this period he was also in charge of Sri Chaitanya Math, Mayapur as well as all the other subsidiary Maths in Navadwipmandal. Srila Audulomi Maharaj once remarked, "I have realised the veracity of the words *Pangum langhayate girim* in my life. I am extremely feeble and unworthy. But Srila Acharyadeva has been kind enough to infuse spiritual strength into my heart and make me do many difficult things."

When Srila Acharyadeva was interpreting the *Bhaktisandarbha* in Mayapur, many listeners took down his lectures. Srila Acharyadeva was pleased to find that the diary of Srila Audulomi Maharaj alone contained the essence of the subtle esoteric meaning of his interpretations.

Srila Acharyadeva tested the allegiance of Srila Audulomi Maharaj in various ways and on all occasions the latter came out successful. In order to have a *darshan* (sight) of Srila Acharyadeva, Srila Audulomi Maharaj put off his Sannyas Costume and embraced the simple, white robes of a humble devotee at Vrindavan in 1953. Charmed by his allegiance and devotion, Srila Acharyadeva showered his choicest blessings on him and empowered him to emerge as the Spiritual Head of the Mission in 1954.

Srila Audulomi Maharaj delivered a hearty speech expressing his allegiance to the lotus-feet of Srila Acharyadeva in the third Annual General Meeting of the Members of Gaudiya Mission. Some stray sentences from that inspiring speech are quoted below—

“After the disappearance of our most beloved Divine Master Srila Saraswati Thakur we were feeling shelterless amidst the encircling gloom. At that time Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur revealed his eternal appearance as the Divine Master out of his fathomless and causeless mercy. He kindly made it known to us that we were not without shelter, that Srila Saraswati Thakur did not abandon us.....The characteristic feature of his Spiritual Leadership lies in the fact that he is ever careful in all possible ways to take the dependants of the Divine Master to their Eternal Destination in this very birth.

His unique message is this—‘We should run on the path of devotion with the speed of lightning. We have to sacrifice ourselves for the service of Lord Guru and Gouranga by utilising our total vital power and entire entity. We must attain the final success in this very

birth.' * * * He is infusing divine inspiration into every heart for starting a super-speedy expedition to the Blissful Abode of Vraja. He is always busy with his kind work of forcefully feeding even the unwilling worldly people the divine nectar of devotion."

The name of **Tridandi-swāmī Srīmad Bhakti Baibhab Sāgar Mahārāj** deserves special mention among the associates of Srila Acharyadeva. He was a prominent Sannyasi of Gaudiya Mission. His Divine Master, Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur described him many times as a completely liberated living saint. His nature was very simple and sincere. He was a *Nīrāg Baktā* or Genuine Speaker without any desire for mundane money, fame etc. He would remain ever-absorbed in the nectarine remembrance of the Divine Deeds of God and His devotees. While narrating the glory of Hari or interpreting the verses of Srimad Bhagabatam, he would become totally oblivious of time and place. He would not notice whether any listener was present before him or not.

He adored Srila Acharyadeva as his most venerable *Siksha-Guru* and carried out his orders. With the approval and blessings of Srila Acharyadeva, he went to the sacred shrine of Srī Sārangamurāri Thākur at Māmgāchhi towards the end of 1947 and devoted the rest of his holy life in serving the Divine Images of Sri Sri Radha-Gopinath worshipped by Sri Sarangamurari Thakur and Those of Sri Sri Radha-Madangopal worshipped by Srila Vasudeva Dutta Thakur. Both Sri Sarangamurari and Sri Vasudeva Dutta were associates of the Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya. Srila Sagar Maharaj

lived in a cottage and endured indescribable hardship at Mamgachhi, a place surrounded by jungles at that time. He rendered loving services to the Deities for more than three years. Srila Acharyadeva was so pleased with Srila Sagar Maharaj that he would occasionally pay a visit to Mamgachhi and stay with Srila Maharaj. Srila Acharyadeva was pleased to install the Divine Images of Sri Sri Gour-Gadadhar there.

Srimad Bhakti Baibhav Sagar Maharaj had a transcendental vision of the past, present and future. Four years before the revelation of the deceptive Marriage-*leela* of Srila Acharyadeva, Srila Sagar Maharaj foretold that *leela* to Sri Radhamohanji, the then servitor of Srivas Angan (i.e. the Holy Courtyard of Srivas, an Associate of Lord Gouranga). One day Srila Maharaj summoned him to the bank of the Ganges in Sridham Mayapur and said, "Dear Radhamohan ! I am warning you about a serious matter. Srila Acharyadeva will manifest his deceptive *leela* as a householder. Those who are extraordinarily fortunate will remain faithful to him. Others will fail to realise the mystery of his *leela*. They will commit offence at his lotus-feet and quit him."

After revealing his householder-*leela*, Srila Acharyadeva once came to Mamgachhi. He was taking rest at noon. Srila Sagar Maharaj was fanning him. Srila Acharyadeva said, "Maharaj ! you are a monk and I am a householder. You should not serve me. This looks odd." Srila Maharaj laughed and said, "Prabhu ! didn't you find anyone else to deceive? At last you are trying to deceive even me by posing to be a householder !" At this Srila Acharyadeva became silent. Attracted by

the selfless love of Srila Maharaj, he stayed there for nearly two months despite many hardships. Srila Bhakti Baibhav Sagar Maharaj disappeared from this world at midnight on the auspicious *Janmāstamī Tithi* (the Day of Advent of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna).

Srīla Bhababandhachhid Bhaktisourav Prabhu was another associate of Srila Acharyadeva. Born in a respectable family in the district of Birbhum, he took initiation from Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. He looked upon Srila Acharyadeva as the Second Self of Srila Saraswati Thakur and served him sincerely and selflessly. A faithful follower of Srila Acharyadeva, Srila Bhababandhachhid Prabhu worked hard for the all-round development of the Mission. He would burn midnight oil regularly in the office at Baghbazar Gaudiya Math and render vital services to the Mission untiringly under the guidance and allegiance of Srila Acharyadeva and then Srila Gurumaharaj (Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswami Thakur). Dressed very humbly, Srila Bhababandhachhid Prabhu would remain totally absorbed in *Gurusevā* day in and day out. A simple-hearted Vaishnava, he would always chant the name of Nītāi and address every devotee as Gopāl. He was elected Additional Secretary of the Mission in 1950 and served the Mission in that capacity till the last day of his life. This associate of Srila Acharyadeva disappeared from the world with the sweet names of Gour-Nītāi on his lips.



CHAPTER — VIII

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION OF SRĪ LA ĀCHĀRYADEVA

The Divine Masters appearing in the Preceptorial Line of Succession are not stereotyped. They have their individual characteristics. Had there been no varieties, it would have been a matter of impersonalism. But the Supreme Lord is the Person served by His intimate servitors in diverse ways. Each servitor has his or her own variety or personal trait. This variety is the spice of the *leela* of Godhead. The service rendered by Srī Vishākhā Devī is not identical with the service of Srī Tungavidyā Devī. Again, the service of Srī Lalitā Devī differs from that of Srī Champakalatā Devī. Similarly the Divine Preceptors also have their personal peculiarities—distinguishing varieties. Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and Srila Saraswati Thakur are not exactly similar. Again, Srila Saraswati Thakur and Srila Acharyadeva have their own specialities. This does not mean that they have contradictions. The distinguishing features revealed in the *Leela* of Srila Acharyadeva bear ample testimony to the fact that he was a bona fide God-sent Divine Master in the Preceptorial Line of Succession.

A unique contribution of Srila Acharyadeva was his emphasis on the loving service of the Divine Deities.

He taught to give special attention to the various services of Sri Vighrahas like cooking various items, singing *Bhogārati* songs, dressing in new styles, decorating the temple etc. He urged everyone to remember the secret truth revealed in *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, Middle 5/96—“*Pratimā naho tumi, sākshāt Brajendranandan*” (i.e. You are not an idol, but Lord Krishna Himself). The Lord mercifully appears in the pure heart of a great loving devotee who wants to behold and serve Him outside also. So he reveals the Lord of his heart as Sri Vighraha (the Divine Image) by infusing inspiration into the heart of a painter or sculptor. Thus Sri Vighraha descends on earth and makes us blessed by kindly accepting our worshipful service. Srila Acharyadeva underlined the importance of rendering various types of loving service to the Deities for twenty-four hours. The third verse of the famous “*Srī Srī Gurbāstakam*” by Srila Bishwanath Chakrabarti was translated into reality in the holy life of Srila Acharyadeva.

“*Srī bigraha-ārādhana-nitya-nānā
sringara-tanmandira-mārjanadou,
Juktasya bhaktāmscha nijunjato’pi,
bande Guroh Srīcharanārābindam.*”

(I pay my tribute to the loving lotus-feet of the Divine Master who engages Himself as well as the devotees in the adoration of the Deities by dressing Them daily in various costumes, cleansing Their Temple and so on.)

Another special contribution of Srila Acharyadeva was the observance of the Appearance-days and

Disappearance-days of the Divine Masters with proper respect and love. He engaged everyone in the adoration of these extra-ordinary auspicious days. He would become quite absorbed in speaking of the divine glories and unique contributions of the former Preceptors. Not that he introduced the observance of such days of Appearance and Disappearance of the Preceptors for the first time. But he infused special inspiration into every heart for properly honouring such sacred days. He always taught all the devotees to remember gratefully the limitless and causeless mercy of the Divine Masters and chant the transcendental glories of Their blissful lotus-feet.

Another great contribution of Srila Acharyadeva was his loving service of the Holy Books written by the Divine Goswamins. In total, he edited and published sixty-five rare books. His editions were universally acclaimed as authentic and perfect. Meticulously and affectionately he published these books one after another, spending lots of money, time, energy and intellect for this purpose. To collect the different readings of the ancient texts from various National Libraries, to study and compare them, to select the pure readings, to prepare the correct manuscripts, to print and publish them, to distribute the books free of cost among the devotees—all these were an absolutely impossible task for any ordinary devotee. Srila Acharyadeva performed this incredible job by dint of his extra-ordinary spiritual power, scholarship and dedication. The entire Vaishnava world will remain ever indebted to him for this unique, divine literary service.

His own work "*Sri Chaitanya Līlāmritasāram*" is an invaluable treasure of Gaudiya Vaishnava literature.

Here we are giving a complete list of the Goswami-literature edited and published by Srila Acharyadeva— (1) *Srīmad Bhāgabatam*, (2) *Srīmad Bhāgabatasya Slokasūchī*, (3) *Srī Bhābārtha-dīpikā*, (4) *Srī Samkshepa-Bhāgabatamritam*, (5) *Srī Bhaktirasāmritasindhuh*, (6) *Srī Ujjwala-nīlamanīh* (with *Srīmad Ānandachandrikā* Commentary by *Srī Bishwanath Chakrabartī*) (7) *Srī Lalita-Mādhava-Nātakam*, (8) *Srī Bidagdha-Mādhava Nātakam*, (9) *Srī Dānakeli-koumudī* (10) *Srī Nātaka-chandrikā*, (11) *Srīmad Uddhaba-sandeshah*, (12) *Srī Hamsadūtam*, (13) *Srī Krishna-janma-tithi-bidhih*, (14) *Srī Sāmānya-birudābalī* -lakshanam, (15) *Srī Stabamālā*, (16) *Srī Padyābalī*, (17) *Srī Rādhā-Krishna-ganoddesha-dīpikā*, (18) *Srī Mathurā-māhātmyam*, (19) *Srī Krishna-leela-stabah*, (20) *Srī Brihad-Bhāgabatāmritam*, (21) *Srī Brihad-Vaishnavā-toshanī*, (22) *Srī Haribhakti-bilāсах*, (23) *Srī Harināmāmrita-byākaranam*, (24) *Srī Tattwa-sandarbhah*, (25) *Srī Bhagabat-sandarbhah*. (26) *Srī Paramātma-sandarbhah* (27) *Srī Krishna-sandarbhah*, (28) *Srī Bhakti-sandarbhah*, (29) *Srī Pīti-sandarbhah*, (30) *Srī Bhakti-sandarbhasya sloka-sūchī*, (31) *Srī Sarba-sambādinī*, (32) *Srī Krama-sandarbhah*, (33) *Srī Brahma-samhita* Commentary, (34) *Srī Gopālāpanī* Commentary, (35) *Srī Yogasara-stotra* Commentary, (36) *Srī Gāyatri-byakhya-bibritih*, (37) *Srī Rādhā-Krishnārchana-dīpikā*, (38) *Srī Gopāla-champūh*, (39) *Srī Mādhava-mahotsabam*, (40) *Srī Gopāla-birudābalī*, (41) *Srī Samkalpa-kalpadrumah*

(42) *Srī Samkshepa-Vaishnava-toshanī*, (43) *Srī Dānakeli-chintāmanih*, (44) *Srī Mukta-charitam*, (45) *Srī Stabābālī*, (46) *Srīmad Alankāra-koustubhah* (with Commentary), (47) *Srī Chaitanya-chadrodāyam*, (48) *Srīmad Ānanda-Vrindābana-champūh* (with the Sukhabartīnī Commentary by Sri Bishwanath Chakrabarti Thakur), (49) *Srī Krishnānhika-koumudī*, (50) *Srī Chaitanya-chandrāmritam*, (51) *Srī Rādhārāsa-sudhā nidhih*, (52) *Srī Vrindāvana-mahimāmritam*, (53) *Srī Sangīta-Mādhābām*, (54) *Srī Rāsa-prabandhah*, (55) *Srī Shruti-stuti-byākhyā*, (56) *Srī Krishna-bhajanāmritam*, (57) *Srī Jagannātha-ballābha-Nātakam*, (58) *Srīmad Bhā gabatam* (10th & 11th Canto), (59) *Srī Krishna-bijay*, (60) *Srī Krishna-prema-taranginī*, (61) *Srī Haribhakti-tattwasār-sangrahah*, (62) *Srī Krishna-bhakti-ratna-prakā shah*, (63) *Srī Chaitanya-mata-manjushā* (64) *Srī Brihat-krama-sandarbhah* and (65) his own work *Srī Chaitanya-leelāmrita-sāram*.

Another distiguishing feature of the *Leela* of Srila Acharyadeva deserves special mention here. In order to guide the Gaudiya Mission in the line of the Divine Teachings of Sri Rupa-Raghunātha, Srila Acharyadeva gave first importance to the self-introspection or soul-searching and ascertainment of one's real position in the field of pure devotion. He was bold enough to declare that preaching without practice has no value at all. Real good can be obtained by listening to the divine discourses only from a genuine Preceptor who practises what he preaches and who has no worldly attachment. Srila Acharyadeva was kind enough to publish some revolutionary articles in various issues of the *Gaudiya* (16th year to 24th year) for the rectification of the

Community and thus fulfilled the inner wishes of Srila Saraswati Thakur. Titles of some of these soul-stirring articles are '*Akāl Bheke Sarbanāsh*', '*Dil O Dimāg*', '*Tumi Āmā Haite Kise Bara*', '*Gundichā Mārjan or Nāmhatta Satamukhī*', '*Gādhā Pitāyā Ghorā Karā Jāynā*' and so on. A vital article entitled '*Adhikār Nirnay*' was published in the Gaudiya (23rd year). In this article, Srila Acharyadeva exhorted the devotees to realise their respective positions in the field of devotion and act accordingly.

Yet another feature of the *Leela* of Srila Acharyadeva was offering personal guidance and coaching to individual disciple. He would think separately for each and every devotional practitioner. If any disciple could not accept his advice, he used to spend sleepless nights in the thoughts of the eternal welfare of that disciple. He would shed profuse tears silently and secretly for the uplift of that person.

Another special contribution of Srila Acharyadeva was his simple, lucid, systematic and original interpretation of *Sri Bhakti-sandarbha*, the celebrated book of devotional wisdom written by Srila Jiva Goswami. This discourse was held in Sri Chaitanya Math, *Sridham* Mayapur. Devotees from distant places assembled in Sri Mayapur to listen to this interpretation of Srila Acharyadeva. During that period, Srila Acharyadeva would daily go to the Dining Hall after everyone had taken prasād (i.e. food offered to the Deity). He would spend just four or five minutes in having a little quantity

of *prasād*. He would wash his own plate, cleanse his dining place. Then without taking rest even for a single minute he would come direct to the Lecture Hall. With rapt attention he used to read and explain the teachings of *Sri Bhaktisandarbha*, *being seated* in the same place from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily. The large lecture-hall of Sri Chaitanya Math and the eastern and southern sides outside the hall would become completely filled by sincere listeners. With infinite care and affection Srila Acharyadeva used to interpret the subtle truth of the science of unalloyed devotion for the eternal and tangible good of the audience. He was a Transcendental Seer—the Supreme Master of the supernal science of devotion. The listeners would be immensely inspired and benefited by his electrifying divine message—by his soul-awakening fiery discourse.

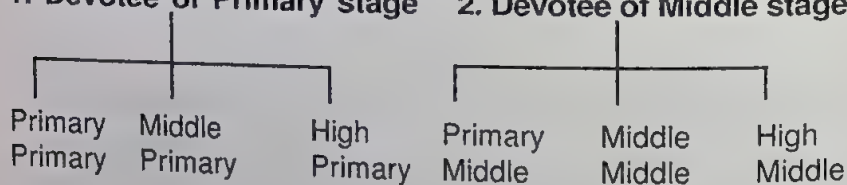
Moreover, another immortal contribution of Srila Acharyadeva was his composition of beautiful tunes of innumerable devotional songs. He satisfied the divine ears of Sri Sri Gour-Krishna by the supreme sweetness of his loving tunes. Being an eternal intimate of Srimati Radha Thakurani, the Absolute Goddess of the Divine Art of Music and Dance, he had a natural command over this transcendental art. Listening to the devotional songs of his honeyed voice, Sri Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and Sri Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur showered their choicest blessings on him. Even now, the musical tunes of Srila Acharyadeva are followed consciously or unconsciously by singers of devotional

songs in various institutions all over the world. The whole world is grateful to Thakur Bhaktivinode for his composition of innumerable devotional songs and also to Srila Acharyadeva for his composition of heart-touching tunes of unique variety.

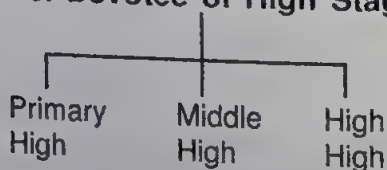
Srila Acharyadeva also wrote some heart-touching songs of deep love and devotion like "Man re, gāo gāo abirām", "Sṛīkrishnachaitanya Sachīsuta Gour gunadhām", "Ohe Premer Thākura Gorā", "Sṛīman-Nabadwīpa-kishora-Krishna Swānanda-Bishwambhara Bhaktabhāba" etc.

Last but not least, a unique contribution of Srila Acharyadeva was to show the subtle gradation of different categories of devotees. Srimad Bhagabat and Sri Bhakti Sandarbha have given a broad classification of devotees. It was Srila Acharyadeva who revealed a more analytical and systematic gradation of devotees. According to Srila Acharyadeva, the detailed classification of devotees is as follows—

1. Devotee of Primary stage 2. Devotee of Middle stage



3. Devotee of High Stage



There are three divisions among devotees of Primary Stage. Devotees of Primary Primary stage possess *loukik*

Sraddhā or feeble Faith. Devotees of Middle Primary Stage develop *sāstriya Sraddhā* or strong Faith. And devotees of High Primary Stage have attained *Nisthā* (Regularity of devotion), *Ruchi* (Taste) and *Āsakti* (Attachment).

Again there are three divisions among devotees of Middle Stage. *Bhāba* or *Rati* (Deep Attachment) begins to generate in the heart of a devotee of Primary Middle Stage. Such a devotee is *Mūrchhita-kashāy*. In other words, some subtle defect remains in a faint state in him. Among devotees of Middle Middle Stage, a fuller development of *Rati* is found. Such a devotee is going to be *Nirdhūta-kashāy*. In other words, he is going to be purged of all subtle defects. The fullest development of *Rati* occurs among devotees of High Middle Stage. Such a devotee is completely freed from all subtle defects. The sapling of *Prema* or Divine Love has grown in his heart.

Finally there are three divisions among devotees of High Stage. The division is extremely subtle. All devotees belonging to this Stage have attained the rarest treasure of Divine Love. However, there is qualitative and quantitative distinction of Divine Love among these devotees. There is transcendental variety of different types of Divine Bliss. The subtle gradation of devotees of this stage is decided according to the variety of Divine Love and Divine Bliss. As the *gopis* or Divine Milkmaids of Vrindavan possess the deepest absorption and

remembrance of Sweet Love for Krishna, they are regarded as devotees of the High High Stage. Srimati Radharani holds the topmost position among all the gopis and is eternally adored as the Supreme Beloved of Sri Krishna. Interested readers are requested to consult *The Gaudiya*, Vol. 20, Issue 34-35 for a more detailed classification.



CHAPTER — IX

SOME EXTRAORDINARY FEATURES OF HIS ĀCHĀRYA-LEELĀ

Srila Acharyadeva was a great lover of *Sridham* (i.e. the Holy Land of the Lord). He would always teach the glory of the produce of *Sridham*. He would often recite the following verse written by Srila Raghunath Das Goswami Prabhu—

*"Brajotpanna-kshīrāshana-basana-pātrādibhiraham
Padārthair nirbājya byabahritim adambham saniyamah.
Basāmi Tshākunde Girikulabare chaiba samaye
Marishye tu presthe sarasi khalu Jīvādi-puratah."*

[*Swaniyama-dasakam*]

(I earnestly desire to live humbly and regularly on the banks of the Holy Radhakunda, adjacent to the Gobardhana Hill, feeding on milk available in *Sridham*, wearing clothes manufactured in *Sridham* and using vessels made in *Sridham*. I long to breathe my last before loving devotees like Srila Jiva on the banks of my most beloved Radhakunda.)

Like Srila Raghunath Das Goswami Prabhu, Srila Acharyadeva would regard things of *Sridham* as Transcendental Objects sent by God out of causeless mercy. He would never accept anything else in his daily

life. He used to praise the luck of even a dog living on produces of Sridham.

He would always advise all to become humble labourers of Sridham. He would practise it himself before preaching it to others. Once a disciple of Srila Acharyadeva was staying in the Math at *Sridham* Mayapur. At 4 p.m. he was surprised to see that all residents of the Math were sitting in a radish-field. The devotees included even the seniormost monk like His Grace Srila Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Goswami Maharaj. The inquistitive disciple learnt that His Divine Grace Srila Acharyadeva Himself had gone to the field to weed out grass with a weeding spade in hand and so all residents of the Math had followed suit.

Thus Srila Acharyadeva was a real Acharya, who himself practised what he preached. His divine life was his message. He would look upon himself as a humble servant working in the garden of Lord Goursundar under the allegiance of Sri Ishan Thakur, the eternal attendant in the House of the Lord. He used to say, "Those who regard themselves as the labourers of *Sridham* and spend their entire energy in the service of *Sridham*, would become gradually free from offences and realise the real ontology of *Sridham Prabhu* and simultaneously attain the divine grace of *Srī Nām Prabhu* (The Holy Name)." Srila Acharyadeva would dissuade everybody from becoming preachers without practice and indulging in pedantic preaching to others. He would always persuade everybody to attain real, eternal good by becoming a genuine, humble servitor of *Sridham*.

Another important feature of his *Ācharyā leelā* was to show proper respect to each and every material for the service of God. Srila Acharyadeva would remain totally absorbed in thoughts of rendering loving service to God. He would collect apparently very insignificant things with great love and care, considering them transcendental objects for the service of the Lord. He would advise his followers to collect carefully petty things like coirs, shells of coconut, coal-dust, even small pieces of cloth. He would say, "These things may sometimes be needed for the service of God. So don't neglect them."

Once Srila Acharyadeva was staying at *Sridham Mayapur*. From Sri Bhaktibijay Bhaban he was proceeding towards his *Bhajan Kutir* (Cottage of worship). Many Vaishnavas were following him. On the way, he came across some coal-dust lying on his left-hand side. Pointing to that place, he said, "What's the matter ? Why are you wasting so much material meant for His service ? You should know that you may sometimes try to cheat God. but these things will never do that. They are sure to be utilised in His service one day or other. That's why these materials are more valuable than your lives." Having said these words, he sat down there and began to collect big pieces of coal from the coal-dust. At this sight every devotee began to do the same.

Once Srila Acharyadeva was staying at Allahabad Math. One afternoon he was offered a drink of coconut-water. After drinking it, he asked his disciple, "What did

you do with the coconut-shell ?” The disciple humbly replied, “Gurudeva, it has been thrown outside the fence”. Having heard this, Srila Acharyadeva was displeased and said, “Is it not a material for His service ? Should you waste it in this way ?”

Once again Srila Acharyadeva was going to some place from Allahabad Math. His only companion was Sri Radhamohanji, one of his faithful followers. Suddenly he found a border of some cloth lying on the road. Srila Acharyadeva said to his follower, “Radhamohan, pick up this border. It may sometime be useful for His service.” Sri Radhamohanji first hesitated to pick up that thing from the road, but ultimately carried out the order of Srila Acharyadeva.

Thus Srila Acharyadeva used to advise his disciples to carefully collect even apparently very insignificant things, regarding them as sacred objects for the service of God. From this it is learnt that he was free from any external or material vision. He always remained absorbed in holy thoughts of serving God and therefore adored every object as Transcendental Article for the Divine Service of the Supreme Reality.

When Srila Acharyadeva emerged as the President-cum-Spiritual Head of Gaudiya Mission, he found that most of the devotees dwelling in Maths were indifferent to personal practice and more interested in pompous preaching. As preaching begot money and fame, most people were very enthusiastic about it. They paid little attention to their own practical lives. Srila Acharyadeva was kind and bold enough to declare unambiguously

that preaching minus practice would cause no practical good to the speaker or the listener. He tried to make everyone realise this truth by citing relevant verses from various scriptures. He gave instruction to stop such preaching immediately and totally. Many so-called preachers were very disgusted at this direction of Srila Acharyadeva. Nevertheless he did not budge an inch from his decision. He added that the same rule should be applied to writing also. As speeches of a speaker without practice (whom Srila Jiva Goswami called *Sarāg Baktā*) cannot touch the heart of the listener, the writings of a writer without practical realisation cannot have an abiding impression on the heart of the reader. Moreover, writings of such incompetent writers cause harm to readers. Their own wrong conceptions about *Bhakti* are transmitted to the hearts of their readers through their writings. Reading articles written by such persons does not promote readers to higher stages but causes demotion in the devotional world. This truth is too subtle to be realised by ordinary people. Yet Srila Acharyadeva tried heart and soul to make them realise it.

Once Srila Acharyadeva was staying at *Sridham* Mayapur. An eminent Brahmachari residing in Math approached him and proposed to establish a new math in some new place. From him Srila Acharyadeva came to learn that already there was a math belonging to another religious society and that the math was functioning very well. Srila Acharyadeva said immediately, "See, we have come for the loving worship of Lord

Hari. We shouldn't try to compete with others. As a math of other community already exists there, you should not compete with them by building another math there. Because if you do that, you will become gradually and increasingly jealous of them. Devotion is the religion of those holy men who are totally free from envy or jealousy. Jealous rivalry is utterly detrimental to spiritual progress."

In this connection another incident of 1948 deserves special mention here. Everyone knows that Srila Acharyadeva came out victorious in all the false cases lodged against him by some of his so-called Godbrothers. He was so full of mercy and pity that he willingly gave away various Maths to them in accordance with their choice. As a result of this, the Madras Math came to be owned by them. At that time Sri Harigopal Dasji, Sri Rajugopal Dasji and another disciple went from Sri Sachchidananda Math, Cuttack to Madras in order to collect contributions. In Madras one person expressed his desire to donate necessary land and materials for erecting a Temple. Immediately he gave the devotees a cheque of Rs. 45,000. The devotees were extremely pleased. In those days the value of Rs. 45,000 was not little. Sri Harigopalji forthwith sent a telegram to Srila Acharyadeva apprising him of the whole matter. Srila Acharyadeva sent back a speedy reply—"Kick out that money and come back." The devotees became rather sad to get this reply from him. But after some moments of deliberation they realised that Srila Acharyadeva did not desire to set up another math in

a competitive mood as one math already existed there. The devotees humbly returned the cheque to that gentleman of Madras, explaining the entire matter clearly to him.

The extra-ordinarily bold, unbiased and truthful behaviour of Srila Acharyadeva pleased the pure devotees but displeased many persons with ulterior motives or desires. These pseudo-devotees revolted against him and did not hesitate to file suits for acquiring ownership of maths. But they lost all the cases. During this period, one fine morning Srila Acharyadeva started alone from Baghbazar Sri Gaudiya Math for a destination which nobody could dream of. He arrived at the house of Mr. Kunjabehari Saha, who instituted cases against him. The wonder of Kunjababu knew no bounds to see him at his doorstep. Seeing him utterly surprised, Srila Acharyadeva said, "Kunjada, are you wondering at my sight ? No, there is nothing to be surprised at. I have come here to let you know the agony of my heart. If you allow me some time, I shall speak out my heart." Both of them being seated, Srila Acharyadeva began to say, "See Kunjada, we have come to worship and serve Sri Hari. It is a matter of reproach and shame to us that we are going into litigation over landed property. You may have been sad to lose the cases, but I request you not to mourn for it. Here is a paper with my signature. Put down the list of Maths you want to possess." With these words he handed over a blank paper bearing his signature to Kunjababu. The latter became speechless in surprise. Tears began to roll down his cheeks. He

could not but embrace Srila Acharyadeva in a mood of surprised joy. Then he wrote in that signed paper the names of Maths he chose to own.

After this encounter Srila Acharyadeva returned to Baghbazar Math, convened a meeting of the Governing Body and apprised the members of the latest development. Many members became extremely displeased, but ultimately though unwillingly accepted the decision of Srila Acharyadeva. After some days Maths were transferred. At the time of transfer, the inmates of the Math owing allegiance to Srila Acharyadeva kept with them the costly costumes of the Holy Images, ornaments and other valuables. As soon as Srila Acharyadeva came to learn this, he was extremely hurt and forthwith gave directions to return all the valuables to the people of Kunjababu. He further added, "Give some money also towards the service of the Holy Images". Thus the unfathomable magnanimity of his heart makes us wonder at him. He cared a straw for wealth, women and fame which the whole world hankers after. Srila Acharyadeva was always absorbed in introspective and sincere *Haribhajan* (i.e. devotional service of the Supreme Lord). He would never support external pomp and grandeur. This world is a place of external show. Even in the spiritual sphere, people put much emphasis on spectacular demonstration or sensational display. They look upon gorgeous rituals as practice of pure devotion. Srila Acharyadeva's outlook was a completely different one. He never liked external performance devoid of any touch of heart. He would

say, "The functions performed without attention to the happiness of the Lord are equal to *Karmakāṇḍa* (Fruitive work aiming at utilitarian result)". Srila Acharyadeva always exhorted all disciples to render sincere, loving and unostentatious service to the Supreme Lord. He used to preach and practise the principles of plain living and sincere serving. His life-style was very simple. Sometimes it so happened in Puri that some distinguished men came to visit Gaudiya Math. They saw Srila Acharyadeva in a very humble dress and said, "Sir, will you kindly show us the way to the room of the Preceptor of the Mission ?" Srila Acharyadeva showed them the room of Tridandiswami Srimad Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaj. Thus he wanted to conceal himself in all sorts of ways.

While travelling he would never inform anybody of his destination. Even his companion would not know where he was going. Only after reaching the station, he would ask his companion to book a ticket for the place he intended to go to. That too was invariably a ticket for the Third Class. During his holy lifetime, he would never go on a First or Second Class journey by train. Being the most revered President-cum-Preceptor of the Mission he should go on a First Class journey—any such thought never occurred to him. He was really humbler than a blade of grass. He never let anyone know his destination lest someone should arrange for his welcome or felicitation at the station. He never wished to build new Maths and Temples, to make many disciples or to be acquainted with persons of high position. Many men

prayed to him for receiving initiation. They waited for many a year. But he did not accept them as his disciples as they lacked sincerity and frankness.

Thus Srila Acharyadeva was an Acharya (Spiritual Master) with a difference. His extra-ordinary and unique behaviour would ever remain as a beacon-light to all sincere seekers of the Supreme Truth. Those who seriously follow his divine teachings are sure to achieve unalloyed devotion, which is very very rare in this world.

One of the most outstanding features of the Preceptor-*leela* of Srila Acharyadeva was his untiring endeavour to make every seeker of devotion conscious of his own position and capability. Many people thought that they had become pure Gaudiya Vaishnavas devoted to the Holy Name, as soon as they got *Harināma*-initiation from the Preceptor. Srila Acharyadeva tried heart and soul to make them understand that their conception was utterly undevotional. He would explain that everyone is entitled to *Karmārpan* (i. e. offering the Fruits of one's actions to God for His pleasure) so long as his heart abounds in *Rajah-guna* (the elements of worldly energy) and *Tamah-guna* (worldly delusion). **Such a person should not pretend to be absorbed in meditation of the Holy Name. He should rather render physical service to Sri Hari-Guru and Vaishnavas for gradually attaining purification and concentration of mind. In the preliminary stage, mind remains fickle and disturbed by various thoughts of self-enjoyment. So even during chanting the Names of the Lord, such a mind remains absorbed in material thoughts and**

cannot remember the Supreme Person. Such chanting of Names without concentration of mind is an offence at the lotus-feet of the Holy Name. One cannot attain Divine Love, the summum bonum of life, by uttering the Names of Hari with offences even for crores of births. In this connection Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami Prabhu has written in his *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*—

“Bahu janma kare jadi srabana kīrtan.

Tabu to nā pāy Krishnapade premadhan”.

[Sri C. C. Adi 8/16]

[Despite hearing and singing the Holy Name for many births in an unscientific way, Krishna-*Prema* (Divine Love for the Absolute Person) is not attained.]

Such unscientific process of worship has been termed as *Anāsanga Sāadhan* by Srila Rupa Goswamipad who declares in *Srī Bhaktirasāmritasindhu* 1.1.35 —

“*Sāadhanoughai-ranāsangair-alabhyā suchirādapi.*

Harinā chāshwadeyeti dwidhā sā syāt sudurlabha.”

(Bhakti or Devotion is not attainable by *Anāsanga Sāadhan* for ages. The Lord does not grant the rarest boon of Devotion even to the performer of *Sāsanga Sāadhan* so easily.)

The word *Sāsanga* means ‘with mastery of devotional practice’ or ‘with inclination to or attachment for direct devotional practice’. The word *Anāsanga* is an antonym of *Sāsanga*.

Srila Acharyadeva exhorted that the ultimate result of all spiritual practices lies in remaining thoroughly absorbed in the uninterrupted remembrance of the

Supreme Lord Srikrishna with an absolutely concentrated mind. Spiritual practice without concentration of mind cannot be considered as real spiritual practice. Such a practitioner is, in fact, entitled to *Karmārapan* and should not look upon himself as a pure devotee devoted to the Holy Name. Srila Acharyadeva warned everyone against such wrong self-assessment. He emphasized on the fact that everyone should remain fully conscious of his real position in the spiritual world and lead his life accordingly.

He wholeheartedly tried to drive the truth home that most of the persons who thought themselves to be his disciples were practically entitled to *Karmārapan* and not worthy of Unalloyed Devotion and that their practices were not real devotional practices but semblance of devotion. Such remarks of his made him very unpopular. Ultimately many so-called disciples could not follow his real intentions and left him to join the Maths of other so-called gurus. They argued, "Shall we remain ever confined to the primary school and not be promoted to higher classes in the college ?" With this egoistic reasoning they joined other pseudo-gurus and remained satisfied with the performance of *Rājāsikī* and *Tāmasikī Bhakti* with the help of their mundane senses. Consequently they themselves became pseudo-gurus and gratified their material senses by becoming addicted to wealth, women and worldly fame. But some fortunate few who realised the transcendental importance of the teachings of Srila Acharyadeva stuck to the shelter of his lotus-feet. They realised that the causeless mercy

of a genuine, great Devotional Master is the only cause of attaining Divine Love. They shed sincere tears to get the blessings of such a Great Devotee. They carried out the orders of Srila Acharyadeva by following the path of pure *karmārpan* with simultaneous chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord. Such fortunate few attained the Supreme Good gradually but certainly.

Srila Acharyadeva observed that most of the inmates of the Maths were not progressing properly in the line of devotion. He tested their aptitude and learnt that most of them were overpowered by the two qualities of *Māyā*, namely, *Rajah* and *Tamah*. In such a condition they could not chant the Holy Name purely and meditatively. Srila Acharyadeva said that such persons should practise the principles of *Daiba Barnāshram Dharma* and consecrate their actions to God for His pleasure. He said that forced celibacy was detrimental to normal progress in the line of devotion. He advised each of them to enter married-life and lead the life of a pure householder-devotee in accordance with the laws laid down in scriptures. He added that by doing so, everyone would attain real progress gradually. A few acted accordingly. But most of them were not ready to shun the comforts of Mission-life. They accused that Srila Acharyadeva was trying to break the integrity of the Mission. Srila Acharyadeva was mortally hurt at this behaviour. He tolerated all such criticisms and completely resigned himself to the will of the Supreme Lord.



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL MARRIAGE-LEELĀ OF SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVĀ

On 30.07. 1949 Srila Acharyadeva revealed his transcendental *leela* of accepting the householder's life in accordance with the mysterious will of the Absolute Person Sri Krishnachandra dwelling in his heart. In the holy Prayag Dham (Allahabad), he married Her Holiness Srīmatī Pranati Devī, the devout daughter of Mr. Atul Chandra Chowdhury, a renowned devotee. Mr. Supati Ranjan Nag, an eminent Vaishnava advocate, acted as the mediator in this holy marriage.

By this divine *leela* of his, he showed the entire world that devotion is beyond the considerations of place or dress. The sacred life of a householder-devotee progressing gradually is by far better than the pseudo-monastic life of an ineligible person. Forced celibacy yields no permanent good. When Srila Acharyadeva failed to make the inmates of the Maths realise these truths, he himself revealed the *leela* of a householder-devotee.

Actually Srila Acharyadeva was neither a householder nor a renouncer of the world. He was the Greatest Associate of God—a Divine Messenger of the Delighting Potency of the Lord. His heart was always enamoured of his most beloved Lord and he was always absorbed

in gratifying the Transcendental Senses of the Absolute Person, Sri Krishna. In fact, Srila Acharyadeva was a *Paramahansa Churāmaṇi* (the most venerable person of the highest devotional order) and as such, *Sarbatantra-swatantra* (beyond all scriptural rules and absolutely independent). We will commit a heinous offence, if we consider his divine marriage-*leela* as equal to the mundane marriage of worldly people.

Many so-called spiritual stalwarts could not realise the significance of the deceptive marriage-*leela* of Srila Acharyadeva. They committed blasphemy at his lotus-feet by considering him an ordinary mortal being. *Maya*, the Deluding Potency of God, made them forget the proclamation of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna to his intimate devotee, Uddhav in *Srimad Bhagabatam* (11/17/27) :

*“Āchāryam mām bijaniyan-nābamanyeta karhichit,
Na martyabuddhyāsūyeta sarbadeba-mayo Guruh.”*

(“O Uddhav, you should regard the Divine Preceptor as identical with Me. You should never disregard Him. You should never envy Him, judging His actions with your mundane intellect. Know it certainly that all gods dwell in the Divine Preceptor.”)

The blasphemers thought that Srila Acharyadeva had become a fallen soul by entering a house-holder's life after taking Sannyas. They quoted this verse from the scripture (without realising its real significance) :

*“Jah prabrajya grihāt pūrbam tribargābapanāt punah,
Jadi sebeta tan bhikshuh sa bai bāntāshyapatrapah.”*

[*Srimad Bhagabatam* 7/15/36]

(A mendicant who renounces the world and then re-enters it is called *bāntāshī* or a man who eats what he vomits.)

Actually this scriptural denunciation is for those religious mendicants who are bound by *Barnāshrama* or caste and social order. But Srila Acharyadeva was a *Paramahansa* Churāmani (a Transcendental Devotee of the supreme stage) and as such, beyond the rules and duties of mundane caste and social order. It has been mentioned in the *Jābālopanishad* that the activities of a *Paramahansa* are incomprehensible to others. He can pretend to accept any stage or order of life according to his sweet will. In fact such a devotee is *Abyaktalinga* and *Abyaktāchāra*. In other words, the marks and manners of such a devotee are inexpressible.

The Supreme Lord Sri Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Himself said in *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat* (Last Part 6/26) :

*"Suna bipra, Mahā-adhikārī jebā hay,
Tabe t̄ān dosha-guna kichhu nā janmay."*

(O Brahmin, listen to the secret of secrets. Whoever is a great devotional master, attains a level where neither any virtue nor any vice can grow.)

In fact, Srila Acharyadeva was an eternal, intimate associate of Sri Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He was *Nitya-siddha* or eternally placed on the highest plane of perfection. As such, he was beyond mundane virtues and vices. He was eternally free from the three qualities of *Māyā* (*Sattwa*, *Rajah* and *Tamah*). Like Srīla Rāy Rāmānanda and Srīla Shukdeva, he was born *Nitya-siddha* and *Nirdhūta-kashāy*.

All the activities of the World Preceptor are supra-mundane, transcendental and full of divine beauty and bliss. Even the idiosyncrasies or caprices of such an Extra-ordinary Guru yield eternal and boundless bliss to the Supreme Lord. From *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat* we learn that Lord Nityananda would remain ever-absorbed in the Transcendental Mood of Vrindaban and would reveal His peculiar behaviour. While he was staying at the house of Sṛīla Sṛīvas Pandit at Navadwip, he would call Srivas his father and Sṛīmatī Mālīnī Devī (Srivas's wife) his mother. In the blissful mood of the Divine Babe of Vrindaban he would suck the breast of Mother Malini. Sometimes he would come to the house of Lord Goursundar without any clothes on his body and would laugh, cry and talk like a frenzied man oblivious of the external world. Sometimes he would jump into the turbulent Ganges during the rains and would swim with the crocodiles for hours together. Sometimes he would scatter rice all around him while dining at the dwelling place of Srila Adwaitacharya. All such peculiar and whimsical activities of Lord Nityananda gave immense delight to Lord Goursundar.

Srila Acharyadeva was identical with Lord Nityananda. He was a *Nitya-siddha* World-Preceptor in the Direct Line of Preceptorial Succession. So all the deeds of Srila Acharyadeva were transcendental and holy. His marriage also was an Auspicious Act of transcendental purity, beauty and bliss that delighted the heart of the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar.

In *Srimad Bhagabatam* (11/20/36) we find the following bold declaration—

“Na majyekāntabhaktānām gunadoshodbhabā gunāh.”

(My sincere and pure devotees are beyond virtues and vices born of lawful and unlawful deeds.)

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says in *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat* (Last Part, 6/35) :

“Garhito karaye jadi Mahā-adhikārī.

Nindār ki dāy, tānre hāsileyi mari.”

(Even if some abominable deed is done by a great devotee, we should never denounce him. We shall perish, if we just laugh at him.)

His Divine Grace Āchārya Vaishnavānanda accepted a householder's life even after taking Sannyāsa. He was not an ordinary devotee, but an eternal associate of Lord Gouranga and Lord Nityananda.

Both Srila Vrindaban Das Thakur and Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami have sung the glory of Acharya Vaishnavananda. They have saved the whole world from committing blasphemy at the lotus-feet of this great devotee. They have paid obeisances to Acharya Vaishnavananda and warned us lest we should look upon him as a fallen soul. They have pronounced him *Acharya* or Preceptor and benefited the whole world by declaring this truth. In *Sri Chaitanyabhagabat* (Last Part, 5/746) we find—

“Āchārya Vaishnavānanda parama udār.

Pūrbe Raghunāth Purī nām khyāti jān”.

(Acharya Vaishnavananda is a very magnanimous soul. Previously he was known as Srila Raghunath Puri.)

While he was a Sannyasi mendicant, his name was Srila Raghunath Puri. When he accepted the life of a householder, his name became Acharya Vaisnavananda.

In *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita* (First Part, 11/42) we find—

*“Āchārya Vaishnavānanda Bhakti adhikārī,
Pūrbe nām chhila jānr Raghunāth Purī.”*

(Acharya Vaishnavananda is a divine master of devotion. His previous name was Srila Raghunath Puri.)

Srila Kavi Karnapur also has declared Acharya Vaishnavananda an Associate of the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar in his famous book *Gouraganoddesha-dīpikā*.

In fact, all the Divine Masters appearing in the Preceptorial Line of Succession are identical with Lord Balarāma or Lord Nityānanda Who is the Fountainhead of all World-Preceptors. Regarding the transcendental love-dalliance of Lord Balarama, Srila Vrindaban Das Thakur has boldly declared—

*“Je strīsanga munigane karen nindan.
Tānrāo Rāmer Rāse karen staban.”*

(Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, First Part, 1/29)

[The sages always denounce association with women. But they also sing songs in praise of the Amorous Dance of Lord Balarama with the Divine Milkmaids.]

Regarding the transcendental pastimes of Lord Nityananda, Srila Vrindaban Das Thakur warned the whole world by citing the following comment of Lord Chaitanya :

"Madirā jabanī jadi dhare Nityānanda.

Tathāpi Brahmār bandya bale Gourachandra."

[*Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat* Last Part, 7/24]

(Even if Lord Nityananda associates with a characterless woman or drinks wine, He must be regarded as the Absolute Object of veneration by Brahma, the creator of this world. Lord Gourchandra Himself has proclaimed this truth).

In this connection a *sloka* came out from the holy lips of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. The verse is as follows—

"Grihnīyād jabanīpanim bished bā shoundikālayam.

Tathāpi Brahmano bandyam Nityānanda-padāmbujam."

[*Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, Last Part, 7/23]

In the annotation of this verse, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur has observed in his famous Gaudīya Bhāṣya of Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, (Sri Gaudiya Math edition, Page No. 1039)—“Lord Nityananda and Sri Sri Guru-Vaishnavas, identical with Nityananda, are so venerable to all that even if they are seen to perform some very abominable deed by our external vision, deluded by Maya, their supremacy and universal respectability remain eternally intact. It is a serious offence to consider them sinful by judging their apparent behaviour with our mundane vision.”

In fact, Lord Nityananda is the Second Self or the Manifestive Aspect of Lord Gouranga. He is the dearest one of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He is the Custodian of Divine Love. He can deliver Gour-Krishna to anyone he likes. The ontology of Sri Nityananda is more mysterious than that of Sri Gourchandra. Even the Vedas and the holy men fail to recognise Lord Nityananda. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu once tested Sribasa's devotion to Nityananda. Sribasa remarked that even if Nityananda took wine and mixed with women, even if he destroyed Sribasa's life and property, his (Sribasa's) love for Nityananda would not diminish. Lord Gouranga's joys knew no bounds at this remark of Sribasa. He showered his choicest blessings on Sribasa and said—

*"Mor Gopya Nityānanda jānīā se tumi.
Tomāre santusta haiyā bar diye āmi."*

(Sri C. B. Middle Part 8/19)

[You have realised the glory of **My Nityananda whom I keep carefully concealed**. So I am extremely pleased with you and want to grant you a boon.]

From the fifth chapter of the Middle Part of *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, we learn that one night Nityananda roared in rapture and broke his holy staff and bowl (two sacred things which a sannyasi or monk always bears).

This is a queer *leela* of Lord Nityananda. No one could comprehend it. Even Lord Gouranga did not question him about this. Sri Gouranga picked up the broken staff in His own hands and went to the Ganges accompanied by many devotees. He placed it carefully in the sacred water of the Ganges.

Some people argue that Nityananda was never a sannyasi. But a careful study of *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat* and its Gaudiya-bhasya (commentary) by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur reveals that he was a Sannyasi. In the Third Chapter of the Middle Part of *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, Srila Adwaita Acharya has described Lord Nityananda as a Sannyasi—

“*Āchārya kahe, Tumi hao Tairthik **Sannyāsī**,
Kabhu falmūl khāo, kabhu upabāsī.*”

(Sri C.C.Middle. 3/81)

[Srila Adwaita Acharya said, “You are a mendicant who wander about from one place of pilgrimage to another. Sometimes you take some fruits, sometimes you fast.”]

In the 13th chapter of the Middle Part of *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, the episode of the deliverance of Jagai and Madhai has been described. When Lord Nityananda and Thakur Haridas approached these infamous sinners with the request for chanting the Names of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, they turned furious and attacked the two Sannyasins.

“***Sannyāsī**-ākār dekhi māthā tuli chāy.
Dhara dhara bali dohen dharibāre jāy.*

.....
*Lok bale —takhani je nishedh karila.
Dui **Sannyāsīr** āji sankat parila.*

(Sri C. B. Middle Part, 13/86-89)

[Rearing their heads, Jagai and Madhai saw the monastic appearance of Nityananda and Haridas and

chased the two with a view to catching them.People said— 'We forbade these monks to come here. Now these two Sannyasins have fallen into danger'.]

In his Gaudiya Commentary, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur has observed (*Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, Sri Gaudiya Math edition, Page No. 649)—“Both Lord Nityananda and Thakur Haridas were **Vaishnava Sannyasi.**”

Later in that chapter of *Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, Jagai prevented Madhai from assaulting Lord Nityananda for the second time and said—

“Era, era Abadhūte, nā māriha ār.

Sannyāsī māriyā kon bhālo bā tomār ?”

(Sri C.B. Middle 13/182)

[Don't hit this *Abadhūt* any more. What will you achieve by killing a Sannyasi or monk ?]

Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur has explained the term *Abadhūt* beautifully in his Gaudiya Bhasya (*Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, Middle Part, 3/125). He writes—“Those who have attained *Siddhi* or perfection in the principles of Sannyas and have become naturally indifferent to external Sannyas, are called *Abadhūt*.....Lord Nityananda held the highest position among all such *Abadhuts*.” So naturally the deeds of Nityananda, the Supreme Abadhut, were incomprehensible even to a man of wisdom.

When Lord Nityananda revealed His peculiar behaviour and pastimes in *Sridham Nabadwip*, almost all people were confused. Nityananda began to wear

valuable ornaments, put on various dresses and decorations. He started taking luxury-goods. A simple-hearted Brahmin, became a little suspicious of Nityananda's behaviour which seemed to violate the principles laid down in scriptures. He approached Sri Gourhari (Who was once his classmate) and wanted to know the significance of the mysterious deeds of Nityananda. The Brahmin said the following words :

*"Navadīwpe giyā Nityānanda abadhūt,
Kichhu to nā bujhon muin karen kirūp.
Sannyās-Āshram tān bale sarbajan,
Karpūr-tāmbul se bhojan sarbakshan.
Dhātudrabya parashite nāhi sannyāsīre,
Sonā, rūpā muktā se tānhār kalebare.
Kāshāy koupīn chhāri dibya pattabas,
Dharen chandan-mālā sadāi bilās.
Danda chhāri louha danda dharen bā kene,
Shūdrer āshrame se thāken sarabakshane.
Shāstramate muin tān nā dekhon āchār,
Eteke mohār chitte sandeha apār."*

(Sri Chaitanyabhagabat, Last Part 6/16-21)

[I cannot understand the mysterious behaviour of Abadhut Nityananda at Navadwip. Everyone knows that he belongs to sannyas Ashram. But he is always seen to chew spiced betel-leaves. A sannyasi should not touch any metal. But he is wearing things of gold, silver, pearl etc. He has put off the red garment and loin-cloth of a monk and dressed himself with fine silk-cloth, sandal-paste, garlands etc. Giving up the sacred staff of a monk, he is carrying an iron rod. He is found to spend

time with the *Shūdras* (low standard people). I see that he does not behave in accordance with the injunctions of scriptures. That's why many suspicions have crowded in my mind.]

Lord Goursundar patiently listened to the words of the simple-minded Brahmin. With a smiling face, he gave the following reply to the brahmin :

*Padmapatre jena kabhu nāhi lāge jal,
Eimata Nityānanda-swarūp nirmal.
Paramārthe Krishna-chandra tāhān sharīre,
Nischay janiha bipra, sarbadā bihare.*

.....
**‘Dharma-byatikramo drista
Tishwarānāncha sāhasam,
Tejīyasām na doshāya
banheh sarbabhujo jathā.**

(Srimad Bhagabatam : 10/33/29)

.....
*Eteke je nā jāniyān ninde tār karma,
Nija-doshe sei duhkha pāy janma janma.*

.....
*Tānhār āchār—bidhi-nishedher pār,
Tānhāre jānite shakti āchhaye kāhār.
Nā bujhiyā ninde tār charitra agādh,
Pāiyāo Vishnubhakti hay tār bād.
Chala bipra, tumi shīghra Navadwīp jāo,
Ei kathā kahi tumi sabāre bujhāo.
Pāchhe tārre keha konarūpe nindā kare,
Tabē ār rakshā tār nāhi Yamaghare."*

(*Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat*, Last Part, 6/28-29, 32,34,118-121)

[A lotus-leaf remains ever-free from the touch of water. Similarly, the transcendental character of Lord Nityananda is ever pure and spotless. O Brahmin, know it for certain that Lord Krishnachandra always plays in His Body.**'As fire can consume everything and still remains pure, so the strong and powerful persons of extra-ordinary spiritual qualities should never be blamed, even if some apparently irreligious or unethical deeds are seen in them.'**.....

So if someone condemns some action of such a Great Person without realising its true significance, he is sure to suffer for this offence in every birth.The divine behaviour of Lord Nityananda is beyond the laws and prohibitive rules of scriptures. None is capable of knowing His glory. If someone unknowingly speaks ill of His unfathomable character, his fortune is obstructed even after attaining devotion to Lord Vishnu. O Brahmin, quickly go to Navadwip and convey these words to others and make everyone understand this truth. Warn everyone not to condemn Nityananda in any way. If somebody commits blasphemy at His lotus-feet, he is sure to undergo endless sufferings and tortures inflicted by Yama Raja, the god of death.]

It should be remembered that Lord Nityananda revealed His Transcendental *leela* of Marriage even after His wanderings as a Sannyasi or devotional mendicant in various holy places of India. He married His eternal

Consorts *Srīmatī Basudhā Devī* and *Srīmatī Jānhavā Devī*. In his celebrated *Srī Srī Nityānandāstakam*, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami has sung the glory of Lord Nityananda—*Jayati jaya Basu-Jānhavā-priya, dehi me swapadāntikam*. (All Glory to Thee, O Darling of Basudha and Janhava ! Kindly give me shelter at Thy lotus-feet.) Sri Suryadas Pandit offered his two daughters to Lord Nityananda in accordance with a divine direction received in a dream. From the book entitled *Bhaktiratnākara*, we learn much about the holy marriage of Lord Nityananda.

“Lok-shāstramate Sūryadās Bhāgyabān.

Nityānandachandre dui kanyā kaila dān”.

(B.R. 12/3983)

[Suryadas was fortunate enough to hand over two daughters to Lord Nityananda ceremonially in accordance with social customs and scriptural injunctions.]

After marriage Nityananda met Sri Sachi Devi, the Holy Mother of Lord Gouranga, Sri Sita Thakurani, Sri Adwaitacharya and other prominent Associates of Sri Goursundar who became extremely happy at this divine marriage of Lord Nityananda. All the devotees were elated with joy.

In the like way, the fortunate few realised the beauty of the transcendental marriage of Srila Acharyadeva. Their personal attachment and love for Srila Acharyadeva increased day by day. They knew it quite well that mysterious and incomprehensible are the ways of the Preceptor, Who is identical with Lord Nityananda. They were properly dovetailed with the Preceptor. So they were not deceived by the Deluding Power of the

Lord. They realised at heart that without the mercy of Lord Goursundar, the divine beauty of the Preceptor's *Leela* cannot be appreciated. These genuine devotees were happy at this divine marriage-*leelā* of Srila Acharyadeva. Thus the Supreme Lord Goursundar examined everyone's devotion and allegiance to the Preceptor, concealed His eternal associate Srila Achayadeva from the mundane intellectuals and pseudo-devotees.

Mahāmahopadeshak Srīla Sundarānanda Prabhu was the renowned editor of the *Gaudiya* (a weekly devotional magazine introduced by Om Vishnupad Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur) and writer of many scholarly books on Vaishnava philosophy. When Srila Acharyadeva revealed his Transcendental Marriage-*leela*, Srila Sundarananda Prabhu appreciated the divine beauty of that *leela*. He wrote a historical letter to Sripad Shibadabastab Prabhu, an eminent Vaishnava regarding the significance of the marriage-*leela* of Srila Acharyadeva. The letter was published in a book (Page No. 25) entitled *Srīla Purī Goswāmīr Atimartya Leelā* written by Sri Jatisekhar Das Bhaktishastri, former editor of the *Paramārthī*, an Oriya devotional magazine introduced by Srila B.S. Saraswati Thakur. A translation of that letter is given below.

ALL GLORY TO LORD GURU AND GOURANGA

Sripad Shibadabastab Prabhu,

Kindly accept my innumerable obeisances. You will be certainly glad to learn that our most revered Sri Srila

Acharyadeva has accepted a suitable bride according to the scriptural rules laid down in *Srī Satkriyāsārdeepikā* on the banks of the Ganges in the holy Prayagdhām on 30.07.49, Saturday. A *Madhwa* Brahmin acted as the preist in this sacred marriage ceremony. Many Vaishnavas graced the occasion by their august presence. Srila Acharyadeva revealed this Transcendental Marriage *leela* in order to expose the irreverence of the concealed slanderers and sceptics, to test and teach the so-called disciples, to test seriously the so-called Godbrothers and sisters, to enhance the hearty joy of some persons and to show the inefficacy of forced celibacy and artificial sannyas. Srila Acharyadeva had the spiritual courage of tolerating the censures of lakhs of critics. He was bold enough to kick out material name and fame. He revealed the *leela* of a householder to establish the truth that both the Sannyas-*leela* and the Marriage-*leela* of the Divine Preceptor who is a Paramahansa have the same significance.

Such type of marriage-*leela* at an advanced stage of life was once manifested by no other than Lord Nityananda Himself, Who is the Fountain-head of all Divine Masters. It was also seen in the holy life of Acharya Vaishnavananda, who was famous as Srila Raghunath Puri in his Sannyas-*leela*. Afterwards the same type of marriage-*leela* was revealed by Their Holinesses Srīla Srīnivāsāchārya Prabhu and Srīla Shyāmānanda Prabhu. All of them were illustrious Gaudiya Vaishnava Acharyas or Divine Preceptors. Many

persons have committed serious offences at the lotus-feet of Lord Nityananda and these Preceptors. Thakur Srila Vrindaban Das, who is called the Vyasa of Sri Chaitanya-*leela*, has warned us in various ways—

"Madirā jabanī jadi Nityānanda dhare.

Tathāpi Brahmār bandya kahila tomare."

[Sri C.B. Last, 6/123]

(Translation of similar verse given before)

.....
"Bhāgabat padiyāo karo buddhināsh.

Nityānanda nindā kare jāibek nāsh."

[Sri C.B. Middle 9/242]

(Some people lose their senses even after reading the Bhagabat and speak ill of Lord Nityananda. These people are doomed to destruction.)

Similarly great souls like Srila Vrindaban Das Thakur, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami Thakur and Srila Kavi Karanapur have declared Acharya Vaishnavananda a Great Preceptor and Associate of the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar. They have warned us against committing offences at the holy feet of Vaishnavananda by considering him a fallen sannyasi.

When Srila Srinibas Acharya Prabhu revealed his marriage-*leela*, his pseudo-disciples, Rupa Kabiraj and Monohar Das, committed heinous offences by condemning him as a fallen person. On the other hand, his true disciple, Srila Ramchandra Kaviraj, was not at all confused. He could see in this *leela* the manifestation of the divine mercy of his Preceptor. "All the deeds of my Guru and Gouranga are very good and beautiful"

— this was his consideration. Associates of Lord Gouranga like Srila Raghunandan Thakur, Srila Gadadhar Das Thakur, Srila Narahari Sarkar Thakur gladly arranged the holy marriage of Srila Acharya Prabhu. True Disciples like Sri Birhambir and Sri Ramchandra Kaviraj were happy to bear all the expenses of the two marriage-ceremonies of their Preceptor. It was before this marriage-*leela* that Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhu conferred on Srila Srinibas Prabhu the title of Acharya or Preceptor. The first son of Srila Srinibas Acharya Prabhu was christened Sri Vrindaban Das by Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhu Himself. When Srila Srinibas Acharya Prabhu disappeared from this world, Srila Narottam Thakur mourned his disappearance in this way—

*"Je ānīla premadhan karunā prachur
Hena Prabhu kothā gelā Āchārya Thākur."*

(Oh ! where is now that Acharya Thakur who brought the Treasure of Divine Love and who was very kind-hearted ?)

Readers of the history of the Vaishnava world know the fact that Srila Shyamananda Prabhu, the renowned Gaudiya Preceptor, revealed his marriage-*leela* and that his sincere disciple, Srila Rasikananda Deva, (who was also a famous Vaishnava Guru) gladly participated in the wedding ceremony of his Gurudeva and rendered loving service to him.

Sri Hanumanji, the leader of the self-restrained celibates, was charmed by the significance of the Marriage-*leela* of Lord Ramachandra and served the lotus-

feet of Sri Sri Rama-Sita with great devotion and love. Sri Narada Goswami dwelled in *Srīdhām Dwārakā* to have a sight of the excellence and beauty of the Transcendental Married Life of Lord Dwārakesh Krishna.

In fact, if we join and serve the wedding ceremonies of God and His Devotees, we can be freed from the bondage of *Māyā*, the Deluding Potency of God. Authors of scriptures have pronounced this truth with great joy and enthusiasm. Those who are always busy with flesh and blood and always think of stomach and genitals cannot realise the significance of the marriage-*leela* of the Divine Master and that of God. Kindly convey all these words to all the householder and non-householder devotees. With regards.

I am,

A petty servant of the
servitor of Vaishnavas,
Sri Sundarananda Das.

Before concluding this chapter, I would like to mention an interesting thing written in the book *Saraswatī Jayashrī* (Page No. 108). In 1921 Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur went to Dhanbad for preaching work. His dearest associate, Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu, accompanied him. On his return journey from Dhanbad to Calcutta by train, Srila Saraswati Thakur attentively read the palm of Srila Anantavasudeva. Srila Saraswati Thakur announced that there was no probability of marriage in the palm of Srila Anantavasudeva Prabhu. Everyone knows that Srila Saraswati Thakur was a transcendental Prophet with an extra-ordinary knowledge

of astrology. His prophecies never proved to be untrue. In the case of Srila Acharyadeva also, the words of Srila Saraswati Thakur proved to be true in a specially significant way. Actually Srila Acharyadeva never married like a creature in a conditioned state. He just revealed his deceptive Marriage-*leela* according to the desire of the Supreme Lord. His apparent marriage was really no marriage at all. It was a beautiful *Leela* (Transcendental Act) enacted by Srila Acharyadeva. Jogamāyā, the Internal Spiritual Potency of the Lord, Who is skilled in making the impossible possible, made him enact this Divine *Leela*.



CHAPTER — XI

SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA'S DIVINE MADNESS FOR SRĪ KRISHNA

Srila Acharyadeva observed with great sorrow that most of the so-called devotees and disciples of the Mission did not want Krishna from their heart. They were fond of the dust and ashes of this world. They wanted to remain engrossed in ephemeral worldly matters. Though they were mechanically uttering “*Jai Prabhupād (Saraswati Thakur)*”, they actually wanted to turn him to “*Bhogyapād*” or object of their sense gratification. Attempt to utilise the Preceptor for one’s own enjoyment or material gain is the worst type of offence at His lotus-feet. Srila Acharyadeva was pained to see that most people were committing this heinous offence. He further thought—“My Divine Master directly ordered me to preach the message of Sri Rupa-Raghunath. But in the present state of the Mission, it is not possible.” He deeply meditated over the matter and solemnly prayed to his Master for guiding him about his future course of action. Receiving the direct inspiration from Lord Guru and Gouranga, Srila Acharyadeva decided to lead a secluded life in Sri Vrindavan and dive deep into the nectarine ocean of Krishna Prema. Accordingly he handed over the charge of the Mission to some distinguished Vaishnavas and retired from the

Mission in 1952 in order to render exclusive, intimate and constant services to the Lotus-feet of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna at Sri Vrindavan under the allegiance of Sri Sri Rupa-Raghunath.

Srila Rupa Goswami and Srila Raghunath Goswami were the two most intimate associates of Lord Goursundar. They were no other than Sri Rupa Manjari and Sri Rati Manjari respectively. Sri Rupa Manjari and Sri Rati Manjari are the two most confidential and intimate attendants of Srimati Radha Thakurani. Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunath descended on earth to divulge the extra-ordinaty secret of rendering special, confidential and intimate services to Sri Radha-Krishna which are inaccessible even to great devotees like Brahmā, Shiva and Nārada. Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunath were kind enough to reveal the fathomless bliss of serving Krishna in the transcendental Mood of Separation.

Srila Acharyadeva manifested the same *leela* of *Vipralambha Bhajan* (Rendering Supreme Service in the Mood of Separation) in Sri Vrindaban. Leaving the entire world in response to a divine call, Srila Acharyadeva rushed to Vrindaban and revealed his *leela* of divine madness for Krishna, the Tender-aged Flute-player of Vrindaban. Completely God-mad, he would wander through the groves of Vrindavan in search of Krishna. Sometimes he would roam about the beautiful banks of the holy Jamuna, calling out "O Radhe ! O Krishna !". Sometimes he would roll on the holy ground of Nikunjavan and shed tears in abundance in remembrance of the

sweet pastimes of the Divine Couple of Vraja. Sometimes he would remain seated in the lonely caves of the Govardhan Hill, weeping like a motherless child for hours together. Sometimes he would strike his head on the lovely banks of the Holy Rādhākunda and Shyāmkunda and shed profuse tears of love remembering the never-ending nectarine love-dalliance of the Ever-young Blooming Couple of Vraja.

Day in and day out, Srila Acharyadeva would sob and sniffle, weep and wail in unbearable pangs of Separation from Krishna. His loving heart would always pine for the direct vision of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda. Mysterious and inaccessible were the functions of his body, mind and intellect completely confounded by Separation from Krishna (*"Krishna-bichcheda-bibhrāntyā manasā bapushā dhiyā"*). His body, mind and soul languished for Krishna. His eyes were always full of tears. His face wore an extremely melancholy look. He put on a torn napkin and he had no permanent shelter. He would often go without food. He did not accept anyone's service. He would always chant the sweet Names of the Lord—sometimes in a loud voice and sometimes in a low voice. Sometimes he would call out in a plaintive tone—*"Hā Gadāi ! Hā Gourānga !"*. Sometimes he would call aloud—*"Hā Rādhe ! Hā Gobinda !"* Again sometimes he would utter in a mournful voice *"Hā Nitāi-Gour-Śītānāth !"* When he sang his favourite song *"Śrīkrishna-Chaitanya Sacchī suta Gourgunadhām"* in a voice choked with tears, the deer, peacocks and other animals of Vrindavan would flock around him and listen to his sad but sweet strain

with rapt attention. Tears would roll down the cheeks of these innocent creatures and the entire idyllic nature of Vrindavan would become thrilled. The heart-rending lamentations of Śrīla Acharyadeva would reverberate through the deep, dark and lovely woods of Vrindavan far from the madding crowd of polluted towns and cities.

Thus Śrīla Acharyadeva became completely mad for Krishna and totally oblivious of his body, dress, food and shelter. "O, where shall I go ? Where shall I see the beautiful face of my beloved Krishna ? O, where is that naughty, pretty Flute-player of Vraja ?" Such was the mood of his languishing heart. When Krishna left Vrindavan and went to Mathura, the Milk-maids of Vrindaban felt forlorn and wept bitterly. Unable to bear the pangs of separation from their Eternal Sweetheart, they became mad for Him. Imbued with the same transcendental mood of separation, Śrīla Acharyadeva talked and behaved madly. Only the devotionally advanced souls could comprehend his words and manners to some extent. They offered their obeisances to this extraordinary Vaishnava Saint and craved for his causeless mercy. To ordinary people, his words and deeds seemed to be eccentric. Sometimes he used to address the trees and plants of Vrindaban and implore them in this way—"Oh Trees ! You are the inhabitants of Vrindaban. Take pity on me and grant me a vision of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda." Sometimes he would embrace a Tamāl tree taking it to be Krishna Himself. (In Vrindaban Tamāl is a favourite tree of Krishna. It is black in complexion and reminiscent of the colour of

Krishna's body). Sometimes he would call the birds and animals of the woods of Vrindavan and feed them gram. Addressing them he would say, "You are all very very fortunate. You are all the eternal associates of Sri Sri Radha Govinda. Have mercy on me." With these words he would shed copious tears. Sometimes he would address the river Jamuna and appeal to her in this way—"O Jamuna ! You are the River of Love. Be kind enough to grant me the service of the Divine Couple of Vraja." Thus Srila Acharyadeva would regard every entity of Vraja as transcendental and most humbly pray to all animate and apparently inanimate objects to be merciful to him.

Always absorbed in the divine mood of separation, Srila Acharyadeva would sing devotional songs of separation composed by great Vaishnava poets. Sometimes he would sing songs from *Saranāgati* (by Thakur Bhaktivinode), *Premabhaktichandrikā* (by Thakur Narottam). Sometimes he would recite similar verses from Sri Rupa's *Stabamālā*, Sri Raghunath's *Stabābalī*, *Manahshikṣā* etc.

Sometimes he would remain seated on the solitary bank of the Jamuna all day long with a face bedewed with tears. From dawn to dusk he remained in the same sitting posture absorbed in meditation. Pearl-like drops of tears would roll down his cheeks. His lips would quiver as he tried to suppress weeping. Occasionally he would heave a deep sigh uttering the names of Radha and Krishna. Now and then he would recite poems of appeal and prayer to Krishna. His voice would often become choked with emotions. As the day wore on, the shadow of evening would slowly come down on the

blue water of the Jamuna. Then Srila Acharyadeva would burst into tears like a helpless baby. He would sing that famous verse of Padyavali :

*'Gato jāmo gatau jāmau gatā jāmā gatam dinam,
Hā hanta ! kim karishyāmi na pashyāmi Harer mukham.*

[Padyavali-324]

[Alas, in the expectation of Krishna, one prahar (a period of about three hours) is gone, two *prahars* are gone, three *prahars* are also gone. Now the whole day has come to an end. Still I have not seen the sweet face of Hari.]

Sometimes he would sit alone in the cave of Govardhana Hill in a pensive mood and chant the names of Giridhari in a mournful tone. He would remember the juvenile sports of Krishna in the lonely and lovely caves of Govardhan and weep aloud uttering the celebrated verse written by Leelasuk Vilwamangal Thakur :

*"Amūnyadhanyāni dināntarāni
Hare twadālokanam antarena,
Anāthabandho Karunaikasindho
Hā hanta hā hanta katham nayāmi."*

[SŪ Krīshna- Karnāmrita, Verse-41]

[O Hari ! O Friend of the helpless ! O Only Ocean of Mercy ! How shall I spend these unfortunate days and nights without seeing Thee ?]

Sometimes Srila Acharyadeva would rush to the beautiful bank of the Sacred Radhakunda, chanting the names of Radha Thakurani, the Goddess of the Holy

Lake. He would lament piteously sobbing for hours together. The fire of separation would burn his tender heart. He could no more bear the woes of separation and burst into tears. In a choked voice, he would recite the following verse of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami—

*"Devi te charanapadmadāsikām
Viprayogabhara-dābapābakaih,
Dajyamānatara-kāyaballarīm
Jībaya kshana-nirīkshanāmritaih."*

(*Srī Vilāpkusumānjali*—10)

[O My Goddess ! I am a petty maidservant of your holy lotus-feet. The creeper of my body is being burnt by the forest-fire of your separation. Kindly make me alive by giving me the nectar of your vision for a moment.]

Gradually the pangs of separation from Krishna became absolutely unbearable to Srila Acharyadeva who decided to give up his life. Without the vision of Krishna, his life ceased to have any meaning and the entire world seemed to be a big void to him. He went on weeping bitterly and incessantly. There was no end to his heart-rending wailings. Sometimes he would recite this verse of *Padyavali* in a tremulous voice :

*"Āshaika tantumabalambya bilambamānā
Rakshāmi jībamabadhir niyato jadi syāt,
Nochedbidhih sakalaloka-hitaikakārī
Jat-kālakūtam-asrijat-tadidam kimarthamī."*

[*Srī Padyāvalī* -335]

(Holding the thread of faint hope for beholding Krishna, I am tolerating this painful delay. If a time be

fixed for attaining Him, I shall keep this life. Otherwise I would like to give up my life by drinking *Kālakūt*, the most deadly poison created by Brahma, the benefactor of the entire world.)

Thus Srila Acharyadeva practised in his divine life the sublime ideals of Sri Rupa-Raghunath who were World-Preceptors of *Vipralambha Vajan*. Srila Saraswati Thakur's last command to Srila Acharyadeva was to preach the gospels of Sri Rupa-Raghunath. By practising the topmost teachings of Srila Rupa Goswami and Srila Raghunath Das Goswami, Srila Acharyadeva revealed those ideals to the entire world. His divine life was his divine message and thus he carried out the order of his Beloved Divine Master in the best possible way. The *leela* of divine madness that Srila Acharyadeva manifested in the last part of his holy life reminds us of the same type of *leela* revealed by Lord Goursundar in *Sridham Puri* towards the end of His Divine Life. In *Sri Chaitanya-Charitamrita*, we get a vivid description of that period of the Lord's Life. Though He was no other than Krishna Himself, yet He revealed the *leela* of a devotee madly seeking Krishna in the transcendental Mood of Separation. As Srila Acharyadeva was an intimate associate of Lord Goursundar, he was charged with the same transcendental Mood of Separation.

Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami Thakur, the Only Custodian of Divine Love in the Preceptorial Line of Sri Rupa-Raghunath in the present world, has written some beautiful poems

glorifying Srila Acharyadeva. In one of his poems he says :

"Namo namo Gurudeva Jaya Srī Āchāryadeva
Laha mor ananta pranām,
Tomār charan bandi Sadā biralete kāndi
Gāhi taba guna abirām.
Rādhā-Krishna-preme matta Satata bihbalchitta
Kāndiyā berāo Vrindāvane,
Chakite darshan pāo Banatale gari jāo
Fukāriyā kānda khane khane.
Punah tānre nā dekhiyā Birahe bidare hiyā
Shūnya hera bhubana sakal,
'Hā Rādhe, Hā Krshna' bale Bhāsi jāo ānkhijale
Mūrachhita para bhūmital.
Taba pādapadmadhūli Tāhe mor snankeli
Māgi kripā sakātar rabe,
Tomār charan dhari Rādhākunde bās kari
Rādhā-Krishna-sevā pābo kabe."

(O Beloved Preceptor Srila Acharyadeva ! All glory to you. Please accept my endless obeisances. Adoring your holy feet I always shed secret tears. I always sing your divine glories. You are mad in love for Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. With a lovelorn heart, you are always weeping and wandering over Vrindavan. When you get a sudden vision of Krishna, you roll down on the forest-path and weep aloud repeatedly. When He disappears, the pangs of separation rend your heart and the entire world seems to be vacant to you. Calling out "O Radhe ! O Krishna !" you burst into tears and fall down senseless

on the ground. I pray for a bath in the holy dust of your lotus-feet. I crave for your mercy in a plaintive voice. O ! When shall I be fortunate enough to dwell on the banks of the holy Radhakunda and render loving services to Sri Sri Radha-Krishna by the grace of your lotus-feet ?



CHAPTER — XII

DISAPPEARANCE OF SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA AND HIS NITYASIDDHA SWARŪP OR ETERNAL IDENTITY

Towards the end of his divine life in Vrindavan Srila Acharyadeva used to stay in a small room within the garden of Sri Purushottam Lal Goswami, a servitor of Sri Radharamandev. At that time even stony heart would be melted at the sight of his love-lorn appearance, his thin body, bearded face, torn clothes and melancholy mood. Whether in summer, or in winter or in the rainy season, he would wear only a striped napkin of Bāripadā (a town in Orissa) and cover the upper portion of his body with another napkin. Despite the biting chill of Vrindavan, he did not use any woolen cloth. He was so engrossed in meditating on Krishna and serving Him in the divine mood of separation that he forgot all about his body. Devotees from various corners of India would send him many valuable furniture, clothes, sweaters, blankets, shawls etc. as gifts. Srila Acharyadeva would secretly give these things away among the Vaishnavas and Brahmins of Vraja.

His pangs of separation from Krishna gradually reached such a stage that he could no more keep his life on earth. On the auspicious *Gourjayanti* day (Day of Lord Gouranga's Advent) in 1958, he revealed his

leela of having a little fever. He fasted all day and chanted the Holy Name incessantly. One day passed, two days passed, three days passed. Everyone implored him to take some food. But Srila Acharyadeva did not comply with their request. In the morning of the fourth day (march 8, 1958), he began to say these words to the devotees around him—"Be introspective, go within. Don't stay outside, you are to go to your own place. Give up vanity of authority. Know it for certain that Krishna alone is the Supreme Ruler, Master and Protector. Take shelter at His lotus-feet. There is no other way of survival. It is Krishna Who is making you do all deeds. It is a great folly to pose to be a master yourself."

In the afternoon he affectionately called all the devotees to his bedside and made them seated near him. Then he started saying, "I have little time at my disposal. Please tell everybody to shed profuse tears and sing these Names—*Srī Krishna-Chaitanya Sachīsuta Gour-gunadhām* and *Srī Nitāi-Gour-Sītānāth*." After uttering these words Srila Acharyadeva became silent for some time. Then with great affection he called out—"Jay Nitāi-Gour-Sītānāth." "Jay Nitāi-Gour-Sītānāth." Tears of love rushed down his cheeks and he left this world. Thus he entered into *Nityaleelā* at the age of sixty three. The devotees present there erected his sacred Samādhi Temple in Sri Radhakunda.

Now, what is his *Nityasiddha Swarūp* or eternal identity at Goloke, the Absolute Abode of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna ? This was enshrouded in mystery for

a long period. Recently Srimati Radha Thakurani was kind enough to divulge this secret in the heart of Jagat-Guru Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami Thakur while he was absorbed in deep meditation soliciting the mercy of Sṛīmatī in Vrindavan. Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami Thakur has revealed the eternal identity of Srila Acharyadeva in a number of beautiful songs. The whole world will remain indebted to Srila Bharati Goswami Thakur for this unique contribution. Only a Jagat-Guru (World Preceptor) can know the secret of a previous Jagat-Guru. This mystery is not revealed even to Brahma, Shiva and Narada, not to speak of ordinary devotees.

From the poems composed by Srila Bharati Goswami Thakur, we have learnt that the Nitya-siddha **name** of Srila Acharyadeva is **Srī Kamalinī Manjarī**. She is a tender-aged girl of exquisite divine beauty. Her eternal **age** is **twelve**. (In the transcendental Realm of Golok, the age of everyone is ever-fixed. It is the Absolute Kingdom of Eternal Youth, Eternal Spring, Eternal Love and Eternal Bliss.). Her eternal **dwelling place** is **sṛī Rādhākunda** (the Divine Lake of Srimati Radharani). Her eternal **service** is **dancing and singing** for the pleasure of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda.

One of the poems of Srila Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami begins like this—

Jayatu Sṛī Purī Sṛī Rādhā-kinkarī
Madhu-bharā Kamalinī.

[*Padāvalī*, 2nd Vol. P. 32]

(All glory to Acharyadeva Srila Puri Goswami Thakur who is the Divine Girl-attendant of Srimati Radharani. Her heart is full of the honey of Divine Love. Her name is Kamalini.)

In that very poem he has written—

“*Srīmatīr nitya priya pālyadāsī*
Tomā bara bhālobasi,
Nartan Kīrtan taba nitya sebā
Tumi chira Kundabāsī”

(You are a beloved Maid of Srimati Radharani. I love you very much. Your eternal service is dancing and singing. Your eternal residence is on the bank of Sri Radhakunda.)

He further writes in that poem—

“*Dwādashī kishorī raser chāturī*
Sebārasete bibhorā.”

(You are a Divine Damsel of twelve. You are very clever in the art of Divine Love. You are absorbed in the bliss of loving service.)

In another poem we find the following lines—

“*Nabīnā kishorī Kamalini Manjarī,*
Mahābhāb-bhara Sebār mādhurī,
Paramā sundarī Krishna-manohārī,
Rasika nāgarī Srī Rādhā-piyārī.”

[Padavali, Vol. 2. P.33]

(Srila Acharyadeva is no other than Kamalini Manjari, a tender Divine Maiden imbued with the Supreme Mood of Divine Love. She renders Sweet Service of Love. Her exquisite beauty attracts the mind of Krishna. She

is a loving Belle —a connoisseur of the Bliss of Love. Srimati Radharani loves her very much.)

In another poem Srimad Bhakti Bhusan Bharati Goswami Thakur writes—

<i>"Biraha bidhura</i>	<i>Kīrtana mādhurī,</i>
<i>Srī pada asthira</i>	<i>nartana chāturī</i>
<i>Charane nūpura</i>	<i>bāje rinijhini,</i>
<i>Srī matī-dayita</i>	<i>madhu Kamalinī."</i>

[*Padāvalī*, Vol. 2.P.31]

(She sings sweet songs in a lovelorn heart. Her feet are always dancing. She is an adept in that art. The jingling of her tinkling anklet is being heard. She is very dear to Srimati Radha Thakurani. She is a sweet Belle named Kamalini.)

Srila Bharati Goswami Thakur has most humbly solicited the causeless mercy of Srila Acharyadeva in another lovely poem which ends in this way—

"Kamalini Manjarī Tomār charan smari
Chiradāsi e Bhārātī kay,
Taba Mahābhābkanā labhibe ki ei janā
Haibe ki hena bhāgyoday."

[*Padavali*, Vol. I, P. 82]

(O Kamalini Manjari ! Remembering your holy feet, your eternal maid, this Bharati, is begging your mercy. Will Bharati be fortunate enough to attain a particle of your Sublime Mood of Divine Love ?)



**SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA'S COMMENTS ON SRĪLA
SARASWATĪ THĀKUR**

Srla Acharyadeva's love for his Divine Master Om Vishnupad Paramahansa 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur was really unfathomable. His devotion to the lotus-feet of his Divine Master was simply unique. Srila Saraswati Thakur took his eternal seat in the loving heart of Srila Acharyadeva. During the life-time of Srila Saraswati Thakur, Srila Acharyadeva was his closest, constant companion, who made him absolutely happy by rendering all sorts of confidential loving service. After the disappearance of his most beloved Preceptor, Srila Acharyadeva fulfilled his inner desires by practising and preaching the sublime message of Sri Rupa-Raghunath. Words fail to describe Srila Acharyadeva's pangs of separation from his Divine Master. This fire of separation burnt eternally in the secret core of his heart.

Srila Acharyadeva revealed his spontaneous allegiance to his most beloved Divine Master in every moment of his transcendental life. In every stage of his sacred life, he adored the beautiful lotus-feet of his Preceptor as his eternal Friend-Philosopher and Guide. While describing the glories of his Gurudeva, he would wax eloquent. The secret love of his tender heart would become revealed in his comments on his Preceptor

which he made in various places on various occasions. His words were full of spiritual fire and firm conviction. Now, we shall present to our readers some of his extraordinary observations about his most beloved Gurudeva Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur.

- I. The words which I have heard from the holy lips of my Divine Preceptor, Om Vishnupad Pramahansa 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, can't be compared with the words of any person of this world. Nobody will ever be able to deviate me an inch from the lotus-feet of my Divine Preceptor.

[Preface to Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikāthāmrita. Vol. I. Page (10)]

- II. The Divine Message of the Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya has descended as the Precepts of the World Preceptor Om Vishnupad Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. The quintessence of that Holy Message is to perform and make others perform Unalloyed Devotion which is capable of attracting the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself.

[Ibid]

- III. It will never be possible to know or realise the conduct of Srila Saraswati Thakur by mundane intellect, talent or power of thinking, because He (as well as all other Preceptors) is eternally a transcendental paradox to those who are averse to the Divinity.

[Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikāthāmrita. Vol. 2 Page. 195]

- IV. I am the eternal servant of my Gurudeva (Preceptor). 'Guru' means 'Weighty'. I shall not serve any weightless thing. Even if the whole world is determined to go against me, I shall not budge an inch from the service of my Gurudeva. Even thirty three crore gods will not be able to displace me from that. [**The Gaudīya** Vol. 19 Issue 31-32]
- V. In order to deliver the averse and arrogant creatures of this world by turning their faces towards God, Sri Goursundar sent two Great Divine Masters in this *Kali*-afflicted age four hundred years after His Disappearance. They are—Om Vishnupad Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and Om Vishnupad Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur appeared in Sri Gour Mandal, where Lord Goursundar revealed the First Part of His Divine Life and Srila Saraswati Thakur appeared in Sri Kshetra Mandal, where the Lord manifested the Last Part of His Transcendental Life. [**Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikathā** Vol. 4 Page 6-7]
- VI. Srila Saraswati Thakur spent billions of gallons of spiritual blood for our eternal good. Still my stony heart did not melt !.....Alas ! my cruel, wicked heart has been burnt by the poison of worldly matter and turned into hard stone. O, when will my wicked and crooked mind be purified ! When will it rush forth for the dynamic loving service of Lord Guru and Gouranga !
[**Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikathā**, Vol. 4 Page 8]

- VII. O Pure Vaishnavas ! I am a wretched, fallen creature deserving hatred. Kindly bless me so that I may be able to feel the separation from the Lotus-feet of My Divine Master Srila Saraswati Thakur with all my heart in every minute, every second, every fraction of a second, and serve His Divine Grace by realising, following and obeying His superintendence of *Sankīrtan Sevā*, as a sincere servant of the sub-servants of the servitors of Srila Saraswati Thakur. [*Ibid* Page 12]
- VIII. Srila Saraswati Thakur has revealed and scattered the Beams of the Divine Light of Thakur Bhaktivinode in the form of Temples in various places of India and abroad. Srila Saraswati Thakur has manifested the Light of Sri Chaitanya Pādapīṭh (Shrines on the Foot-prints of the Lord). He has been kind enough to distribute innumerable flames of sincere servitors throughout the world. Those who unenviously adore these divine flames will be blessed with the real mercy of Srila Saraswati Thakur [*Ibid* Page 77]
- IX. Srila Saraswati Thakur has been propagating the message of Sri Swarup and Sri Rupa Goswami in the pages of the Gaudiya for long sixteen years. He has been endeavouring tirelessly for the supreme good of the entire mankind. Words fail to describe his magnanimous mercy which gives rise to eternal good only. [*Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikathā mṛita* Vol. 2 Page 157-158]

- X. To regard Srila Saraswati Thakur as a human being is a heinous offence. We must not pretend to remain indifferent to such offence. We must vociferously and vigorously protest against this. Otherwise we shall be deviated for ever from the path of pure devotion. [*Ibid* Page 322]
- XI. If we remain absorbed twenty four hours in the service of Srila Saraswati Thakur, worldly attachment will never be able to exist. Srila Saraswati Thakur did not want to give even a moment's rest to his disciples who were sincere seekers of spiritual good. He would never take into account the convenience and inconvenience of their body and mind. This is a glaring example of the infinite mercy of Srila Saraswati Thakur. The moment we become negligent in the service of God, considering our physical or mental convenience or inconvenience, we shall be enthralled by *Maya*, the Deluding Potency of the Lord. [*Srīlā Āchāryadever Srī Harikathāmrita* Vol. 4, Page 242]
- XII. Srila Saraswati Thakur was not the worshipper of the masses. The gathering of the masses is not the Mission of Devotion.What is Mission ? It may seem that a building which is constructed with bricks, sand, cement etc, and is well-protected by doors and windows, which is enriched with colour and lime and equipped with beds, chairs, tables and other furniture, which is furnished with

voluminous books and journals, is called Mission. But actually it is not so. The place where pure devotees dwell in a group is called the Mission.Srila Saraswati Thakur has no connection with what is termed as Mission by the ignorant non-Vaishnavas. We have no need to serve such a Mission. It would be better for the world if such so-called Mission does not exist. The real meaning of 'Mission, is the Association of pure souls—the glory of community of the All-glorious Gurudeva. This Mission is beyond construction and destruction. Unalloyed serving attitude should be known as the soul of the Mission. [*Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikathā* Vol. I. Preface, Page (14)-(16)]

- XIII. In your personal *bhajan*, you won't get His mercy. Who will rectify your faults there ? There are dangers galore in your personal or solitary *bhajan*. The Mission offers you greater opportunities of *bhajan*. The probability of evils is by far greater in solitary worship. So Srila Saraswati Thakur has done a great good to humanity by establishing the Association of Pure Devotees. One gets greater opportunities of serving Krishna in the Abode of Sri Gurudeva as a member of the Divine Group of Sri Gurudeva. By establishing the Association of pure devotees, Srila Saraswati Thakur has revealed his boundless mercy to us. In this respect his mercy has surpassed even

that of the Famous Goswamins like Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan. [*Ibid* Page (14)]

XIV. Srila Saraswati Thakur has made it known to the entire world till the time of his disappearance that the place where there are genuine desires and efforts to make the Lord happy by loving service should be known as Gaudiya Math. Otherwise the place where unnecessary or extraneous matters come and cover the unalloyed serving attitude should be known as the den of enjoyment of the worldly-minded people.....The place where there is *Maya*, where there is vanity of one's own authority, where one falsely boasts that one has such and such abilities, man-power, property, speaking power etc., is not veritably the Gaudiya Math established by Srila Saraswati Thakur.Some people driven by the *Rajah* (worldly activity) and the *Tamah* (worldly delusion) qualities of *Maya* live in such a place and are ruined by quarrelling over their respective mundane interests. In such a place there is only the body without life in it—the outward structure without the inner substance. No sincere seeker of eternal good should come to such a place. [*Srīla Āchāryadever Srī Harikathāmrita*, Vol 2, Page 161-162]

XV. We should always feel severe pangs of separation for Srila Saraswati Thakur. We should have yearnings for going to his lotus-feet. The feeling of

separation rises from an eager desire. We should have an earnest longing for knowing how Srila Saraswati Thakur serves and adores Krishna in *Nityaleela* after disappearing from this world and how he reveals his *leelā* with all other Preceptors Who have entered into *Nityaleelā* (Eternal Pastimes with the Lord in the Absolute Realm). If we can shed sincere tears secretly and pray to Srila Saraswati Thakur with severe pain of heart, we shall be blessed with His vision and that of all other Preceptors and *Sri Pancha Tattwa*. (**Srī Gaudīya** 4th year, 9th-10th Issue P. 73)

- XVI. Srila Saraswati Thakur was the Transcendental Wish-yielding Tree. Many Persons came to Srila Saraswati Thakur with many ulterior motives. He has fulfilled the respective desires of those people and thus deceived them. Some have collected money, some have received worldly education, some have got buildings and property, some have gathered name and fame as so-called speakers or preachers and so on. Thus they have been deceived by Srila Saraswati Thakur who has been kind enough to deliver Divine Love to the sincere seekers only. [**Srī Gaudīya**, 2nd year, 14th Issue]



CHAPTER — XIV

THUS SPAKE SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA

1. **T**he Divine Master or Preceptor is the Transparent Medium. It is through Him that one can have a sight of God. The Preceptor is the nearest and dearest one of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.
2. If a single person with unalloyed serving attitude is found, the Mission can run with him alone. In fact, he himself is the Mission. If such a single Math exists, pure practice-cum-preaching will exist. It is not real preaching to gratify the senses of the worldly people by the spectacular demonstration of the sudden emergence of various false institutions like the rising of rockets for fireworks display.
3. *Māyā* means measuring temperament. If you are going to measure, you are imitating Krishna. But the Supreme Lord Krishna is unique and unrivalled. No one can be His parallel or rival. He can measure everything. To measure is to enjoy. This measurement or enjoyment is the absolute monopoly of Krishna alone. He is the Supreme Proprietor and Enjoyer of all. If we have an enjoying attitude towards Him, we will be endangered, because none can enjoy Him.

4. Show your own example by practising what you preach. Build up an ideal life. I do not want plenty of work. Let the service be little in quantity, but it must be flawless and perfectly pleasing to Krishna. Lord Nityananda, Thakur Haridas or Sri Swarup Damodar Prabhu did not write many books. But it was the ideal divine life of each of them which acted as the World-Teacher like *Srimad Bhagabatam*.It was their pure and perfect practice which was more eloquent than speech. Their divine characters themselves preached to the whole world.
5. *Srimad Bhagavatam* is the highest Authority in the universe about the Lord as revealed by Krishna Himself. This scripture alone deals with Krishna, the Supreme Reality of Love and Beatitude and with the ways to conquer the Unconquerable.
6. Before the Goddess of Bhakti (love and devotion) the Majesty of Lord Krishna disappears, yielding a place to sweetness. The *Ajita* (Unconquerable) Krishna is conquered and captivated by sweet love and attachment.
7. No one can attain Unalloyed or Pure Devotion by making compromise with *Māyā* (the Deluding Potency of the Lord).
8. When every column of the daily newspapers of the whole world denounces me, I shall know that Lord Nityananda has bestowed His real mercy on me.

9. Krishna will examine us in many ways. He will inflict severe pain on us. He will test whether we seek Him earnestly or not. We should remain prepared for that.
10. Shrī Harinām which is Bhagavān Himself is not impotent. He is Omnipotent. He can show His Eternal FormThe Holy Name is the Ocean of Nectar. One becomes mad by tasting just one drop of that nectar, not to speak of plunging into the Ocean.
11. We must aim at progress or promotion in devotion. We must have a strong determination to become totally dovetailed with the Preceptor. We should not look forward to some thing small. It is good for us to have a very high aim in devotion. We should yearn after the height of the eternal plane of confidential service of Sree Krishna.
12. In the opinion of the material world, time is money.Sincere seekers of Truth must remember that time is unalloyed devotion. We should remain ever-cautious of the continuous loving service of God and His Devotees without wasting even a single moment.
13. We ought to feel a severe burning pain for Krishna in our heart. It is absolutely necessary to feel a grief or agony for Him. 'I could not serve Sri Krishna, His Holy Name and His Devotees'—such

thoughts should always arise in our heart and make us extremely anxious and distressed. He who has such feelings of sorrow or pangs of separation has attained the real good.

14. Freedom of will is the noblest, most precious, most gracious gift of Krishna on all *Jivas*. Proper utilisation of that gift is devotion. And misuse of that gift is enjoyment or abnegation.
15. Sri Krishna and His Associates can appear on the mundane plane without being mixed with or adulterated by *Maya*.
16. God has no mundane body. He possesses His Eternal Spiritual Body. His transcendental Form or Figure is Real, All-blissful and All-existent. His Divine Appearance is beyond the purview of human senses or human thoughts. God is not impersonal. He is the Supreme Person—the Absolute Person. He has no touch with *Maya*. He is the Lord of *Maya*. He is not such as He is conceived by human beings. He is Supramundane. He is Transcendental. He cannot be and is not to be measured or gauged by human senses.
17. The Name of Krishna is not a mundane word. It is the Absolute Sound. It is not acceptable by the ear unless it becomes a listening, serving or submissive ear. Mundane words rise and die in mundane ether. But the Holy Name of Krishna is eternal, immortal and transcendental.

18. '*Bipralambha*' or Separation-in-Love is neither worldly joy nor worldly sorrow. It is unalloyed or transcendental optimism.
19. Severest pang of separation from our eternally nearest and dearest Divine Masters—this is *Hari-bhajan* (Adoration of God) at its highest.
20. One cannot be a real disciple unless one can enter the heart of one's Preceptor. Only the sincere servitor can learn the desire of the Master's heart. In the mundane world, a chaste wife knows the heart of her husband. An affectionate mother knows the heart of her son. In the transcendental world also, a bona fide disciple can learn the secret of his Preceptor's heart by dint of his sincere, loving service.
21. Those who want enjoyment and those who want salvation are both traders. They have their own commercial interest. Real Name does not appear on their tongue. Only the letters come out of the lips of those who pretend to chant the Names of God with the object of gratification of senses in any shape. What they pretend to utter is not pure Nāma-Kīrtan.
22. The Holy Name is Autocrat. He is the Absolute Person with infinite pastimes. He can exercise His eternal masculinity. He can remain eternally as He is. He cannot be made, mended or moulded otherwise by any attempt of prakṛiti or *Māyā* and *Jīva*.

23. The Holy Name is Eternal, All-Intelligent, Blissful and Transcendental. He has neither any beginning nor any end. That Name reveals Himself—displays His Forms, Qualities, Retinue and pastimes. The Name does so to those sincere servitors who are pure-hearted, who have no ulterior motive, who have no commercial interest, who perform *Sevā* (service) for *Seva's* sake only and to whom *Seva* itself is both the Means and the End. The Name talks to them, attracts them and makes them mad in ecstatic bliss.
24. Back to Krishna and His Realm, our eternal Home—this is the message of our Preceptors.
25. Don't see the skin or flesh of *jīvas*. Behold them as souls. Don't consider yourself as a combination of bones, blood and skin. Show your real identity. Raise the anchor of your worldly attachment and start the voyage to the Blissful Land of Vraja.
26. If somebody does not build up his life in accordance with the order of his Preceptor, it should be learnt that he certainly considers his Preceptor a mundane person. It should be learnt that he has not properly taken the shelter at the lotus-feet of the Preceptor.
27. If the preceptor or a Great Devotee casts an affectionate glance at somebody with deep attention, that is called the glance of mercy. Otherwise he is generally seen to cast a cursory glance in a casual way at so many persons. If

somebody falls within his glance of mercy, he becomes exceptionally blessed.

- .28. A *jiva* cannot perform devotional service by his own effort. Unalloyed devotion is beyond the endeavour of *jivas*. The causeless mercy of a Great Devotee, Who is the Divine Messenger of the Exhilarating Potency of the Lord, is the only cause of attaining Pure Devotion.
29. If we give some trouble to a creature, we are troubling the Creator Himself. We should develop a friendly attitude towards all living beings. We should have sympathy for all. We should not take pride in ourselves as 'Vaishnavas'. Should a warm of stool have some pride ?
30. One Person pulls the wire or string form behind and He is Krishna. Having faith in this is called devotion.
31. The more one gets devoted to the service of Vaishnavas, the more one advances along the path of Vaishnavism. He who is the highest servitor of Vaishnavas, is the Emperor of Vaishnavas or the Preceptor.
32. We should regard the service of the lotus-feet of our Preceptor as the be-all and end-all of our life in every birth.
33. He who has fully taken refuge in the lotus-feet of the Preceptor and has dedicated his all unreservedly to his Divine Master, being

completely dovetailed with His will, is the real disciple. To him alone the Preceptor hands down his most confidential devotional Property. Such is the preceptor's affection for His servitor.

34. We must have a dogged determination to attain 'Sevā' (the loving service of the Lord) In this very birth.
35. One should not move at a snail's pace in the path of devotional service. One must have the speed of an aeroplane.
36. Practice is the shield and preaching is the sword. If the shield and the sword remain together or if practice and preaching go on simultaneously the good of one's own self and that of others are achieved.
37. 'Māyā' (the measuring temperament) is ugly and 'Vipralambha' (Service in the Mood of Separation) is lovely.
38. In the Mood of Separation, the devotee becomes more absorbed in Krishna and His loving service. The chanting of *Mahāmantra* rouses the feeling of Separation. It is 'Vipralambha' which is the only procedure of Haribhajan (Adoration of the Lord).
39. We should constantly chant the Name of Hari in a clear voice and weep for His mercy. He who develops Taste for the Name is soon blessed with the 'darshan' (vision) of Krishna.

40. There is no way but mercy. One must always weep secretly for gaining the mercy of Lord Guru and Gouranga. One must completely surrender oneself to and take refuge in Their lotus-feet.
41. So long as our hearts are not freed from offences by 'Karmārpan' (Offering the fruits of one's actions to God for His pleasure), we shall never be able to shed sincere tears.
42. A single drop of sincere tear flowing from the eyes of even a very unworthy person who weeps as his heart melts owing to sharp feeling of his own worthlessness, can draw the affectionate attention of God in such a way as cannot be done by thousands of spiritual practices, austerities and pious or sacred conducts.
43. One cannot gain permanent spiritual good unless one becomes absorbed in '*bhajan*' with rapt attention. Profound absorption in the Names-Forms-Qualities-Deeds etc. of the Divine Masters is absolutely essential. If this absorption increases gradually, positive spiritual good will be attained.
44. One who wants to perform *Haribhajan* must not indulge in physical comforts. No one can progress in the path of devotion by deceitfully avoiding physical service. If physical labour is offered to God, one's heart gets purified and humility appears there. The more one humbles oneself before God, the more one attains His mercy. So

everybody must sincerely apply all his physical energies to the service of Sri Sri Hari-Guru and Vaishnavas.

45. If somebody breathes his last, while rendering service to Sri Hari, the gods will joyfully dance in heaven. And he who cleverly avoids physical labour in the service of Hari should be brutally treated.
46. If anybody preserves his mundane egotism and pretends to utter the Names of Hari for crores of births, he will never be able to chant the Pure Holy Name, because he has already bolted the door against the Divine Light of the Holy Name. He does not seek the Holy Name. He is a hypocrite.
47. The very nature of a soul afflicted with pangs of separation from Krishna is to cry aloud or sing loudly. The seekers of enjoyment may have many religions. But the servitors of '*Vipralambha*' have no other religion than loud '*Kīrtan*' (Chanting the Names or Glories of God).
48. Too much attention to body and devotion to Krishna cannot stay simultaneously. As the desire to serve Krishna increases, the engrossment in the material body decreases. If listening and chanting are performed properly, physical idleness will diminish. To regard oneself as an enjoyer is the greatest impediment on the path of devotion.

49. As a mother becomes extremely anxious when her baby is lost, as a cow becomes restless when her calf goes a little away, so should we feel anxiety and agony for not beholding Krishna. We ought to feel extreme sorrow for Him. We ought to weep profusely for Him.
50. I do not need many disciples. I want such a person as is capable of sacrificing completely all his personal interest for the pleasure of the Lord he worships. Such a single disciple is sufficient for me.



CHAPTER —XV

THUS WROTE SRĪLA ĀCHĀRYADEVA

In this last chapter of the present book, we would like to present some beautiful letters of Srila Acharyadeva. All these letters were written to Om Vishnupād 108 Srī Sīmad Bhakti Keval Audulomi Goswāmī Thākur, the most intimate associate of Srila Acharyadeva. As mentioned earlier, Srila Audulomi Goswami Thakur adored Srila Acharyadeva as identical with his Spiritual Master *Nityaleela-pravishta* Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Sīmad Bhakti Siddhāntā Saraswatī Goswāmī Thakur. Every word uttered or written by Srila Acharyadeva was held in high regard by Srila Audulomi Goswami Thakur. So he preserved with great love and care all the letters written to him by Srila Acharyadeva. We shall present only fifteen letters in the present chapter. Among these, Letters No. 7, 13, 14 and 15 were originally written in English by Srila Acharyadeva himself. We have translated the remaining letters into English.

In his famous essay **On letter Writing**, A. G. Gardiner has described the essential qualities of a good letter in this way — “*How simple it is and yet how perfect!*” The letters of Srila Acharyadeva are characterized by a sweet simplicity and lucidity of style. They are perfect specimens of the art of writing transcendental letters.

Each of these letters contains precious advice and direction in the path of devotional progress. From these

letters it is quite evident that Srila Acharyadeva had a keen attention to the defects and problems of each practitioner of devotion. With great care and affection he tried for the alleviation of those defects. Apparently Srila Acharyadeva was very rigid and strict. He could not tolerate any lapse in the service of his most beloved Lord. With an iron hand he would deal with all anti-devotional elements. But actually he possessed a very soft and affectionate heart. Bhababhuti, the celebrated Sanskrit litterateur, commented in his **Uttar-Rāmcharit** that great men are simultaneously “bajrādapi kathorāni, mridūni kusumādapi” (i.e. harder than thunder, softer than flower). This was true in the case of Srila Acharyadeva. Letter No. 7 reveals the truth that he was extremely loving and lovable. Dear Reader, the love of Srila Acharyadeva is transcendental and eternal, infinite and fathomless. If any person anywhere in the world sheds sincere tears in secret, craving the causeless and limitless mercy of Srila Acharyadeva, he is sure to be blessed with the tender touch of his nectarine affection even today.

Letter No. I

All glory to Lord Guru & Gouranga

Sri Chaitanya Math

Mayapur

21. 7. 1940

With innumerable obeisances to the lotus feet of Sri Sri Vaishnava —

My dear Maharaj,

Happy to receive your kind letter. I pray to all to propitiate the Lord by sincerely serving Om Vishnupad

Paramahansa 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur in deeds, thoughts and words.

Attachment for material body is a great impediment on the path of devotion. Our absorption in mundane body will go on increasing, if we don't serve Sri Guru and Vaishnavas heart and soul. Please convey this to Sri Hareram (a novice). If he labours hard and serves Sri Hari-Guru-Vaishnava without caring for body, it would be his *Sādhana* (i.e. Devotional Practice). I firmly believe that all our physical ailments will go away secondarily, if we can serve the Lord sincerely and wholeheartedly.

Nobody can preserve this material body for ever, however he strives and takes care of it. We should gain the health of our spiritual body even at the cost of physical suffering. Is it proper to regard the dress as the body ? I pray to God that none of us may fall into the fatal danger of considering the body as the soul and being increasingly attached to the body.

Attachment for body and devotion to Krishna do not exist simultaneously. The more one gets devoted to the service of Krishna, the less becomes one's attachment for body. To regard oneself as the enjoyer is the main evil — the principal defect. Defects like idleness will abate as one engages in devotional hearing and chanting properly. Please try to make Sri Hareram realize this truth. We should give up thoughts of ephemeral things and heartily endeavour to gain eternal treasure. Our disease increases, if we don't perform *sevā* (service) of the Lord.

We are all well here. Accept my prostrated obeisances.

An unworthy servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 2

All glory to Lord Guru & Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math

Calcutta

20. 8. 41

With innumerable prostrations at the holy feet of Sri Sri
Vaishnava —

Dear Maharaj,

Your letter of the 18th instant is to hand. Your letter is full of humility which everyone should follow. You should not worry — you will have no trouble when you go to Sri Vrajamandal. However, I don't ask you to go there immediately. I fervently desire and pray to our most-revered Preceptors dwelling in Vraja and to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna that they will be kind enough to attract you to the Holy Vraja Dham.

The scriptures proclaim that at the semblance of remembrance of the Lotus-feet of the Lord, neither any physical nor any mental trouble or ailment can exist —

*Ādhayo byādhayo jasya smaranān - Nāma Kīrtanāt,
Tadaiba bilayam jānti tam Anantam namāmyaham.*

[Srimad Bhagabatam 4/29/24]

*Shārīrā mānasā dibyā baiyāse je cha mānushā,
Bhoutikāscha katham kleshā bādheran Hari-samshrayam.*

[Srimad Bhagabatam 3/22/37]

Please write to me occasionally and let me know your well-being. We are all well here by the grace of God. I offer my obeisances to all of you there.

An unworthy servitor,
Puri Das

Letter No. 3

All glory to Lord Guru & Gouranga

Sri Mayapur

13. 2. 43

With prostrated obeisances to the lotus-feet of
Srīmad Bhāgabat —

My dear Maharaj,

Please accept my innumerable prostrations. Happy to
receive your letter dated 10.2.43.

I have been pleased to learn that you have been
reading and interpreting Devotional Scriptures four times
a day. I believe that the gentlemen who are listening to
your discourses will be attracted to the service of Lord
Goursundar. Hope many persons come to hear your
discourses. It is a matter of joy that forty fortunate persons
have honoured *prasād* in the Festival and earned
devotional merit.

I have learnt the names of the servitors there. The fact
that they have been performing *sevā* with enthusiasm
indicates their progress in *bhajan*. There is no doubt that
Lord Goursundar gives a sincere and eager servitor the
opportunity of various types of services and competence
to perform them. Again accept my obeisances.

A petty servant,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 4

All glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Bishramghat, Mathura
14.8.43

With innumerable prostrations at the feet of Sri Vaishnava,
Sripad Maharaj,

Kindly accept my *dandabat pranāms*. You have been entrusted with the responsibility of conducting the Festival of Sri Gaudiya Math. Always keep the Math resounded with discourses on **Sri Bhakti Sandarbha**. Please observe whether timely worship of the Holy Deities is performed without committing any *sebāparādh* (i.e. 32 types of offences in service or worship). Take care of the servitors of the Math and distribute their respective services. Please solemnize the Festival of Sri Bhagabat in this way.

While talking to the outside people with primary regard, try to depict in words the lurid picture of those who do not adore Sri Hari. People who have no regard at all should be sent away by giving worldly honour. Hope Śrīla Tīrtha Goswāmī Mahārāj will be present in Calcutta during the Festival.

An unworthy servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 5

All glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Bishramghat, Mathura
7.1.44.

With prostrations at the feet of Sri Vaishnava —
Sripad Maharaj,

Your letter is to hand. I came to learn your report about
Rāutārā.

Those who dwell in Sridham must give up physical lethargy or aversion to toil in the service of the Lord. They should always engage in hearing¹ and talking about Sri Hari and serving Him sincerely. They must not talk about other people or indulge in idle gossips at home and elsewhere. Please try to learn secretly whether they do such things. If they do so, take strict measure so that they give up such anti-devotional behaviour. They should be compelled to leave relation of flesh and blood.....The more one gets attached to the Beloved Lord, the less becomes one's attachment for matter. We have noticed it in the behaviour of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and Sripad Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu. Then only, dwelling in Sridham will be possible. Otherwise Sri Shiva, the guard of Sṛīdhām, will drive one away with his trident. Humbly convey the message of real *Haribhajan* to one and all.

All's well here. Let me know all about your well-being. Accept my prostrated obeisances.

An unworthy servitor,
Puri Das

Letter No. 6

All glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Chaitanya Math
16.10.44

With obeisances to the holy feet of the Great
Vaishnava —

Srimad Audulomi Maharaj,

Your letter dated 13.10.44 reached me today. I am
happy to learn that you have been reading and interpreting
Sri Bhakti Sandarbha regularly.

Sri.....has written a letter and made a petition to
me. Here I quote a few lines from his writing — “My life
has become unbearable. I have not the least desire to
live any more. I have taken a vow to go on fasting from
the 25th *Kārtik*, Sunday in order to draw the special mercy
of Sri Sri Gour-Gobinda. It will not be possible on my part
to discharge my duties as the Servitor of Math from that
date”.

Please destroy this vicious attitude of Sri.....and
impress on him this matter in such a way that he never
forgets it in this life. The Beloved Lord of our heart is All-
Blissful. He is the Transcendental Figure of unalloyed,
eternal Delight. He can never be attained by any *tāmasik*
or vicious attitude of the mind. If somebody shows
allegiance outwardly, but thinks otherwise in his mind, he
is a hypocrite. Such hypocrisy is anti-devotional. Please
make a deep and abiding impression on his mind about
this.

Today I wish to discourse on Sri Hari here. With obeisances to all —

I am,
An unworthy
servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 7

All glory to Sri Guru and Gauranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
45, Hanuman Road
New-Delhi
27.12.1944

My dear Sripad Audulomi Maharaj,

Please accept my humble dandabats at your lotus-feet and convey the same to others at Yogapith.

Arrived here safe last night. There was no trouble on the way. There was no inconvenience due to the causeless mercy of Sri Gaursundar.

Sripad Gauranugraha Prasad, Sripad Radheshyam Prasad, Professor Babu's wife & Bhakta Das's mother from Lucknow met me at Kanpur Station with 'Poori' and 'Sak' which were refused and distributed among the passengers in the compartment. The fruits they had got were accepted and brought to Delhi Math.

A funny Punjabi Mohammedan girl of 4 years was travelling in the same compartment from Howrah to Tundla. She displayed such a great affection for me that she could not leave me without kissing, spreading her

little hands round my neck. All through she addressed me as 'Bābājee' and 'Namaste'. She was ready to part with her toys and sweets to me. Surprised to find such affection. Don't know why : It is difficult to avoid such affection, sincere and un-tutored as it was. The little girl attracted the attention of all the passengers in the compartment by her sweet words and gaiety.

Her father, a wealthy youth, was delighted to hear Harikathā in a general way and departed at Tundla with his 'Salam' (obeisance) to me.

There were fairly good companions in the compartment. There was no rush except at Kanpur.

Hope you have received wire of my safe arrival.

With humble dandabats.

Yours affectionately,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 8

All glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Bishramghat
10.1.45.

With obeisances to the feet of Sri Sri Vaishnava—
Srila Maharaj,

Your letter of the 7th instant is to hand. I learnt that Sripad.....Prabhu had arrived safely.

Hope the S.D.O. of Krishnanagar has been pleased.

I came to learn that Sri Brajendra Dey of Mymensingh

had been appointed a teacher on a salary of Rs. 80 per month.

You need not hurry in the matter of going to Paresh Babu's house. You may go there at your convenience. If you find shrewd, proud, sceptical or irreverent people, conceal yourself and leave that place. We should always keep in mind this line of **Saranāgati** by Thakur Bhaktivinode — *Jīb bale kari āmi, se to satya nay.* (A living being says proudly, 'I can do such and such things.' But this is not true.) In fact, Paramātmā or the Supreme Soul or the Indwelling Monitor is the Guide of all our senses and Proprietor of everything. We should always remember this truth. He is the Supreme Judge to decide what is good or bad, just or unjust, proper or improper, auspicious or inauspicious. It is His judgement which is supreme and absolute. We must accept and adore it humbly and wholeheartedly.

Please accept my obeisances.

A petty servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 9

All glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Purushottam Math
Puri
11.11.45.

With prostrated obeisances to the feet of Sri Sri Vaishnava,
Sripad Audulomi Maharaj,

Your letter of the 6th instant reached me yesterday.

I came to learn from your letter that Dr. Radhagobinda Basak had become pleased to hear your devotional discourses. It is better to be engaged in the sincere service of Sri Krishna than just to be pleased by hearing talks on Krishna. Otherwise such idle hearing will merely become as tasteful as some sauce or pickle.

If you wish, you may go to Narayanganj for a day or two on your way back to Sri Yogapith.

We are all well here. Please let me know the news of your well being.

A petty servant of the
Servitor of Vaishnavas,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 10

All glory to Lord. Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Delhi
8.12.45

With obeisances to the holy feet of Sri Sri Vaishnava—
Sripad Audulomi Maharaj,

Please accept my prostrations. Today I have got your letter of the 4th instant.

After spending two nights in Kurukshetra, I returned here last night. Please inform Srimati Sasibala Debi, wife of Sri Rajendra Chandra Chatterjee of Ramakrishna

Mission Road, Mymensingh that I have received her letter. The holy name of the Lord is Omnipotent. If we take refuge in Him sincerely, He will surely remove all our defects.

I shall go to Mathura soon. All's well here.

An unworthy servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 11

All glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Purushottam Math
Puri
21.12.45.

With innumerable prostrations at the lotus-feet of Sri Sri Vaishnava—

Sripad Audulomi Maharaj,

Your letter of the 13th instant reached me today.

I spent three days in Mathura. From there I came to Remuna via Calcutta at the irresistible force of Lord Srī Srī Gopīnāth. Remuna is the direct Brajadhām — where Sri Goursundar Himself became the speaker and narrated the glory and leelā of Sri Gopinath and Sri Madhabendra Puri. Sri Nityananda Prabhu Himself listened to it.

I went to Balasore Station for returning to Calcutta, but came to Puri at the inspiration of Sri Sri Gopinath. I would like to return to Calcutta after the *Viraha Utsav* (Disappearance Festival of Srīla Saraswatī Thākura).

Please accept my innumerable prostrated obeisances.

A petty servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 12

All Glory to Lord Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Calcutta
12.4.46

With innumerable obeisances to the lotus feet of Śrīmad Bhagabat —

Revered Sripad Audulomi Maharaj,

I have got your letter dated 11.4.46 from Sri Akshay Mohanti. He has safely arrived here with *prasād*.

Hope Sri.....Gupta has got the reply to his letter from you as per the notes given by me. I don't think he will stay there. You may read out and interpret the verse from Srimad Bhagabatam (3/5/45) to him.

No one can get the mercy of a Great Devotee, until one is free from offences. If one has disregard for or insinuation to Sri Vishnu or Vaishnavas, one's heart does not become pure. Unless one's heart is pure, one does not receive the glance of mercy of a *Mahat* or Great Devotee.

Today I am starting for Dacca by train. Sri.....has come from Delhi. He will also go to Dacca. Please accept my *dandabat pranāms*.

An unworthy servitor,
Puri Das.

Letter No. 13

All Glory to Sri Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Bishram Ghat
Mathura U.P.

My dear Srila Audulomi Maharajji,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances and convey the same to all my friends there.

Please obtain from Srijukta Subhadra Debi the Telegu Translation of Sri Bhakti-Sandarva which was recently returned to her by Mr. T.R. Krishna and despatch it by registered post as soon as possible to Mathura. There are some omissions in this book and it is therefore required here in order to make some additions, corrections and alterations.

Hope you are doing well.

Yours ever etc.
Puri Das.

Letter No. 14

All Glory to Sri Guru and Gauranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Bishramghat, Mathura U.P.
2.7.48

My dear Sripad Audulomi Maharaj,

Kindly accept my humble dandavats at your holy feet and convey the same to Srila Tirtha Maharaj.

Last evening I received your telegram intimating that today you will be inaugurating a new hall at Puri. Today I have received your telegram intimating Sri Ramji's demise. Ramji was fortunate in breathing his last at Sri Purushottam Dham. May the Supreme Lord shower his blessings on him !

It appears that the Lord teaches us a lesson in timing the two events so closely one after the other. One dwelling place is made ready for habitation and another is vacated for good.

Again with greetings to all friends there and with dandavats once more to you and Srila Tirtha Maharaj.

Humbly yours,

Puri Das

P.S.

Sri Ramji's demise, a sad event no doubt, is really not an occasion for sorrow. The Lord removed the Madras Math from the care of the Gaudiya Mission and this made it possible for Ramji to come to Sri Purushottam Dham just in time for the end of his earthly existence. If he had remained at Madras and expired there, it would be doubtful whether he had attained '*sadgati*'. But as he has laid down his mortal coil at Sri Purushottam Dham under the care of Vaishnavas, he has certainly attained '*sadgati*' for which there is ample scriptural testimony.

Puri Das

Letter No. 15

All Glory to Sri Guru and Gouranga

Sri Gaudiya Math
Bishramghat, Mathura
20.11.48.

My dear Maharaj,

Please accept my humble dandavats at your lotus feet and convey the same to all my friends there.

As at the moment I am not finding any one able to write in Bengali script, I am compelled to have this postcard written in English through Sharmaji (L.C.), for which please excuse me.

I am glad to receive your kind postcard of the 17th instant and am much pleased to learn that the Urja Brata has terminated successfully at Puri. Please inform Sri Shashibhushan Bebartaji that I have got their letter and have re-sent the same to Sripad Sundarananda Prabhu, to do the needful. With my love to you all.

Affectionately yours,
Puri Das

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Before concluding the present book, I make my humble obeisances to the Beautiful and Blissful Lotus-Feet of **Nityaleelā-pravishta Om Vishnupād Paramahansa 108 Srī Srīmad Bhakti Prasād Purī Goswāmī Thākura** (Most Revered Srī Srīla Āchāryadeva).

I fall prostrate on the ground and crave the causeless mercy of the Holy Lotus-feet of Srila Acharyadeva, uttering His *Pranam-Mantra* (Verse of obeisance) under the allegiance of all pure Vaishnavas—

*Nama Om Vishnupādāya Gouraprestha-swarūpine,
Sṛīmad Bhaktiprasādākhya-Purī Goswāmine namah.
Sandarbhāloka-dānena abhaktidhwānta- bināshine,
Bhaktibijarpanenaiba sweshta-smṛiti-bidhāyine.
Nāmakripaika-nishthāya kārunya- ghanamūrtaye,
Bhāgabata - rasāmbhodhou nīrantarābagāhine.
Sṛī-Rādhā-Mādhava-prema-projjwalārati-bardhana,
Vipralambha-rasābishta-Rūpānugāya te namah.*

[I make my prostrated obeisances to Om Vishnupad Srimad Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur, the dearest associate of the Supreme Lord Sri Goursundar. He has dispelled the darkness of non-devotion with the light of the Six Sandarbhas (by Srila Jiva Goswami). He has offered the seed of Devotion and awakened the memory of His Most-Beloved Lord. He is dependent solely on the mercy of the Holy name. He is kindness personified. He always bathes in the nectar-ocean of Srimad Bhagabat. He is ever enhancing the Luminous Service of Confidential Love towards Sri Sri Radha-Madhab. He is always absorbed in the Transcendental Mood of Separation-in-Love. He is a Great Preceptor in the Line of Srila Rupa Goswami. I offer my innumerable obeisances to His Holy Lotus-feet.]

*Bānchhākalpa-tarubhyashcha kripāsindhubhya ebachā,
Patitānām pābanebhyo Vaishnavebhyo namo namaḥ.*

[I make my humble obeisances to the lotus-feet of all
Vaishnavas — who are the divine wish-yielding trees, who
are the oceans of mercy and who redeem all fallen souls
(out of their causeless mercy).]



